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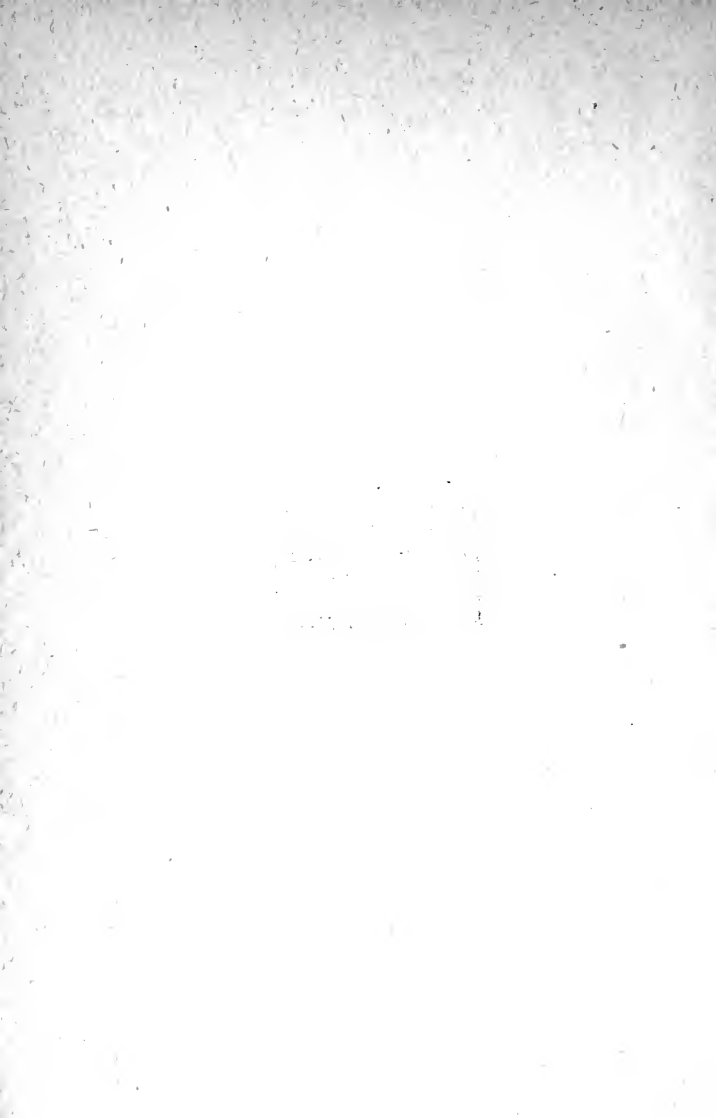


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In
White Armor



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CAPTAIN ARTHUR ELLIS HAMM

IN WHITE ARMOR

THE LIFE OF
CAPTAIN ARTHUR ELLIS HAMM
326TH INFANTRY, UNITED STATES ARMY

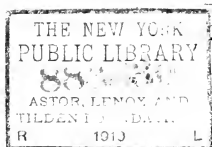
BY
ELIZABETH CREEVEY HAMM

ILLUSTRATED

The Knickerbocker Press

NEW YORK

1919



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ELIZABETH CREEVEY HAMM

In Memory of
MY HUSBAND

*"And one there was among us, ever moved
Among us in white armor, Galahad.
'God make thee good as thou art beautiful!'
Said Arthur when he dubbed him knight."*

Putnam, 17/11/1912

FOREWORD

CAPTAIN ARTHUR ELLIS HAMM was killed in action on the Lorraine front on September 14, 1918, a few weeks after his twenty-sixth birthday. That is an age at which many life-histories are just beginning to be written, but, saith the Book of Wisdom, "Honorable old age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor is its measure given by number of years."

Captain Hamm's achievement in his short span of life was so remarkable, and his personality was so complete, that I am justified in publishing this sketch of his life and character.

He was an ideal American soldier—one of two million such perhaps—but by virtue of his dash and brilliancy and remarkable beauty he may well stand for the type of all that is best in the American, man or soldier. He was physical perfection, tall, slender, and of kingly bearing. His carriage was erect and easy, every muscle fit and supple for chivalrous service. His hair was chestnut brown with glints of gold, his eyebrows were black and drawn with a master sweep of the Great Painter's

brush, and his deep-set eyes were a peculiar shade of dark, warm gray. The strong lines in his cheeks deepened into dimples when he laughed, as he did a great deal. Altogether his was a figure of distinction and a face of powerful magnetism, a face in which fire and sweetness, gentleness and strength were blended.

Arthur Hamm typified the best of Americanism in that he was in every fiber a self-made man. The forces which made him were his own inner forces, that America simply gave him the opportunity to develop and wield. His personality was vivid, and has left in the hearts of those who knew him a rare vision of human grace and beauty. He seemed to them a shining ray of youth and sunlight struck aslant the world, lent to us for a brief space, too rare and lovely to endure. "Being made perfect, in a little while he fulfilled long years; for his soul was pleasing unto the Lord; therefore hastened he out of the midst of wickedness."

His marriage was the culmination of his life, and it has been impossible to write of him without regard to his great and tender love of wife and home. From the few letters I have selected to share, I could not altogether cut the personal note, without wholly losing Arthur. He himself mounted a high tower like the Muezzin of the

Orient, and proclaimed his love for me to East, West, North, and South!

The influences of his early life I could only indicate, for Arthur came into my own life at the moment of complete manhood. I recall his saying to me one evening in Florida, during the first week of our friendship:

“If I were to tell you all the things I have done during the past ten years you would think me forty years old, which in truth I sometimes feel. And at that I am only on the threshold of my real career.”

“When did you do that?” I had asked him. “I thought you were going up the coast on a Clyde Line boat in 1915. And how in the world did you ever have time to indulge in typhoid fever?”

I still do not see how he had time to crowd so many adventures into so short a space, and if I were to attempt to follow out in detail the life-story that came to me bit by bit, it would take as many volumes as for a “Jean-Christophe.” He started at fourteen years of age on his life-quest, a quest which culminated ten years later in an ideal love, and was soon thereafter crowned with martyrdom. I have likened this time of spiritual growth and progression to that quest of Arthur’s knights of old, adventure upon adventure leading toward

one definite and pure ideal, and I have chosen the quotations to head each chapter from the *Idylls of the King*, all but two which are from Tennyson's *Sir Galahad*. Those myths of the past are the symbol of all our human struggle onward, but Arthur's pilgrimage was remarkable because he never set himself a purpose that went unfulfilled, never knew defeat of soul, and moved steadily on and on to a splendid and heroic climax.

There are men who have fought and died in this war who met the call to patriotism and manhood with a sudden leap to greatness and have thereby found redemption. The night before my husband sailed for France he said: "Remember, that if I should die in action, it is after all, a pretty good way to square accounts with the world."

But for Arthur Hamm there were no accounts to square.

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In White Armor

CHAPTER I

BOYHOOD

"Some called him son of Launcelot, and some said
Begotten by enchantment."

ARTHUR ELLIS HAMM was born at Groveland, Massachusetts, on June 29, 1892. His parents were both of undiluted English descent, the mother's name, White, having first reached these shores on that commodious ship, the *Mayflower*. He was the English type of American, tall and slender and aristocratic, with a lean face and determined jaw. As a little boy he was already handsome and upstanding, generous and high spirited.

Arthur and his older brother were brought up and sent to church like true little descendants of the Puritans, in the town of Stoneham, whither Arthur was transported at the age of three. His father was a manufacturer of soap, and the family

struggled with poverty and with despotic tyranny. The children adored their mother, championed her and protected her, but could find no ground for love or respect toward their father. When a very little boy Arthur was obliged to assert his will against his father, and even—a soul-searing experience for a twelve-year-old child—to threaten his life.

He had thrown a stone one day, accidentally breaking a window. His father dragged him roughly to the barn, by no means for the first time on slight provocation, there stripped the boy to the waist, and brought a horsewhip down across his shoulders. Arthur's brain reeled. He slipped like an eel from his father's grasp, flung himself upon his rifle, which hung upon two nails on the wall of the barn, levelled it steadily, and cried: "Put up that whip! Now go out of here ahead of me, and quick too!" When he replaced the rifle and dressed himself, Arthur was white and shaking, the tears running down his cheeks, but he had won a victory. Courage and justice had met brute force and conquered. He was thereafter the ruling spirit in his home. To multiply instances of his unhappy boyhood would only be distressing. But from such surroundings and out of such conditions many a great American



ARTHUR ELLIS HAMM—AGE 6

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has come. The American boy has the immeasurable advantage over the boys of other races and countries—in that he can make his life anything he pleases, if only he has the inheritance of good blood and sturdy character.

No little boy, in whatever environment, can be altogether unhappy, and Arthur was active and joyous by temperament. He was a favorite in school, where he showed all the qualities of a born leader, and both in Sunday school and day school he struggled against the opprobrium of being a "teacher's pet." "I hated Sunday school like the dickens," he said, "and yet I took a concealed joy in being arrayed in my Sunday suit, and in kid gloves that hung off the fingers. I was glorified in the sight of all grown-ups, and humiliated in the sight of my equals. I could hold my own on week-days by a fair exchange of lickings, but on Sundays I was at a terrible disadvantage."

He was a splendid marksman, and loved his rifle, but in the ordinary sense of the word, he was not a "sportsman." An experience that he had as a boy of thirteen cured him of all desire to aim at living targets. It is one of the few incidents of his boyhood that Arthur told me about in detail.

"I had a new rifle," he said. "Had only shot

the thing off a few times at a target in the field back of our house, and this was my first trip with it to the woods. Right off I saw a little chickadee, cutest thing ever, singing so hard that all the feathers of its throat were ruffled out like a tiny feather boa. It must have been singing to its mate. Without one thought of what I was doing, I raised my rifle and fired. It was some shot, too, for the little chap's head was clean severed from his body. I threw myself down on the grass and cried and cried. It cured me of any love of 'sport,' for the only protection that a woods creature has against you is its fear, and a frightened rabbit or squirrel is a piteous thing. Its heart beats like the mischief, and you have either to shoot it in the back or when it is running away from you. I'd as soon shoot a man facing me with a gun in his hand as eat my dinner, but as it happens, I haven't had to do that yet."

Arthur could not bear to see suffering, much less to inflict it, but his was not the sensitivity that turns away from painful things. He was quick to run to the help and relief of pain. His sympathy was of the sort that asks: "What can I do?" And to "do" something was Arthur's instinct in any situation. He was gentle, sensitive, and a dreamer, both in boyhood and in man-

hood, but he always set about to make his dreams come true, and his initiative carried him to the solution of many a tough proposition. "Aggressive" men called him, a fighter, a dynamic force, and a leader of men, and yet he kept those qualities that we do not always associate with strong and masterful men, sympathy and consideration for all men, and a deep, unchanging tenderness.

In his fifteenth year came the tragedy and turning point of Arthur's life. "The bottom fell out of everything." His sweet and beautiful mother died, a woman still in her thirties, of rare and exquisite nature, whose love alone had made home tolerable. It was a tremendous moral crisis for Arthur, and the one great grief of his life. The warring elements within him might easily have been harmful to his growth, but Arthur took his mother's image to his heart, and made of it a symbol and a constructive force. In her name he decided to give the happiness she had missed to some other woman, and from out the dissensions and misery of his own boyhood's home, he built up an ideal of how things ought to be. From that moment forward, Arthur directed and ordered his life with spiritual Love held steadily before him as its end and aim, and though

in the course of his pilgrimage he came to know every phase of good and evil, every side of life, he moved ever "in white armor." His naturally sunny temper rose soaring above grief, laughed at obstacles that would have discouraged a weaker boy, and to himself he never admitted the possibility of defeat.

Even to me he could scarcely speak of that mother, whose face, as he grew to manhood, was transformed into one like hers but younger, that he called his "Dream-Girl." Once he laid his head against my shoulder and said softly: "Beth, I loved my mother." And when I asked him a little about her, he could only say: "She was like you. She was beautiful, like you."

Arthur's future relations with his father were very slight. Arthur sent him pecuniary aid from time to time, and felt an unhappy responsibility toward him, which was in no way reciprocated. The father practically deserted his children, and when at last some years ago he dropped completely out of sight, it was a relief to everyone concerned.

After his mother's death Arthur at once left home, and a wealthy family invited him to visit them, and very soon made him an offer of adoption. Their son was Arthur's schoolmate, and these friends offered to send the motherless boy to

school with their own son, and later to Harvard, with equal rights of sonship. Arthur loved luxury always, and whenever he had the opportunity was exceedingly hard on towels, the weekly wash and the hot water supply. He was living at the A's in a suite of luxurious rooms. He did not hesitate an instant in his decision.

"No," he said. "I must live my own life and win my own education—those are the only terms on which I can hold to my independence and self-respect." And so he left his greatly disappointed friends, and began his independent life as he ended it, in the uniform of a United States Infantry soldier. He was first mascot, then chief bugler with the Massachusetts National Guard, laying there the foundation of the military fitness which made him later one of the most fearless and brilliant officers in the American Expeditionary Force to France. The soldiers called him, "The Candy Kid," and they formed a special sort of protectorate over him that he never forgot. "The kindness of those rough men," he said, "and their care of me was one of the most touching experiences I ever had. Drinking and swearing and worse stopped when I was present, yet I saw enough of it to give me a permanent distaste for that sort of thing. I believe I would have been

soundly thrashed if any of them had caught me saying 'damn,' and that was mildness itself to them."

Arthur's shooting soon brought him prominence and popularity, and his championships no less than his grit made him a favorite with his regiment. The medals he won are many and impressive, and to the winning of one of them we owed our longest and happiest vacation from army life. Why? Because of a broken nose for the mending of which we were granted three weeks' leave of absence last winter.

Arthur was never fat but once in his life, and that was when he gave an exhibition drill in the "everwarm safety suit" which I foisted upon him on the eve of his sailing,—an article thereafter known as "the damn bathing-suit," and which you will meet in several of his letters. I imagine that his shoulder bones might have been quite sharp when he was sixteen, at least they proved so on this occasion, for the back-kick of his rifle finally lacerated his flesh and began to pain him intolerably. He was shooting prone upon the ground, and finding his sleeve actually blood-soaked, he attempted to bank a mound of earth to take the force of the repeated blows. But his precaution was inadequate, and the butt of his

rifle crashed back upon his own poor little nose. He finished the match and won it too.

Arthur's pluck was always of the most cheerful variety—he was not a Stoic, one felt no “grim determination” about him. He never indulged in heroics. In fact he had the dread of physical pain or disability natural to perfect bodily health. He was also “afraid of the dark,” or so he told me. No shrinking influenced his conduct, however, and if ever he was hurt he made a joke of it. It was difficult to induce him to rest, and to remain in bed he had to be literally unable to lift his head. Still with the National Guard, he got up from an attack of grip one day, contrary to the orders of an exasperated doctor, and hiked with his company forty miles, one of a bare dozen to stick to the finish. Of course he went back to bed again, but was perfectly happy and satisfied.

Altogether Arthur remained three years a boy soldier, studying and reading in his leisure hours, for he had by no means given up the idea of school, and was gradually evolving a plan of his own which he called “practical education.”

A college education and professional life were his dominant ambition, but of the nature of the latter he was undecided. “How can I decide,” he thought, “until I know the world better,

and find out the thing I like best and am most fitted to do?" He felt that the average boy just out of college had the most important part of his education still before him, and that in acquiring it he lost the relation between life and the reading he had done in his University. "A boy who has been sent to school and college as a matter of routine, has not had time nor opportunity to get acquainted with realities," he argued. "How can he relate his reading and study with experience, and know how to reject or affirm what he reads? Half the value of his college course is lost through immaturity and inexperience. He forms his judgments from books or from his professors, and often the wonderful opportunity is wasted because it has come to the boy too easily, has been accepted grudgingly, and at times is thrown utterly away in the sowing of futile 'wild oats'."

This theory he held to with the tenacity of faith in his judgment that was always justified for his own case. "I would not recommend it to anyone else," he said once, "and as it worked out I got to college much later than I intended, and am making a late start in life. Discouragements began to come just as I wanted to enter. Everyone said, 'Oh you will never get to college! Why don't you give it up and settle down?' But

I did get there, and you can't possibly imagine what it means to me. It renewed my faith in myself, and makes me feel that the future holds no difficulty that I cannot conquer."

However dangerous Arthur's theory of education might prove for the average boy, it had worked marvels in his instance. At twenty-four he had the bearing and poise of a much older man. His mind was well-informed and analytic, and his judgment was mature. He was thoughtful, witty, and of a most charming and natural manner. His chivalrous attention to women, especially if they were of my mother's age, never failed to win their hearts. It was native knightliness in him, for in his wandering and adventurous life he had not come very much in contact with women. He had never been attracted to any young woman in his life, for he believed passionately in ideal love, and waited for it to come to him with wistful longing. His own unhappy home-life had inspired Arthur with the great desire to make some woman supremely happy. This ambition he realized as completely as every other.

Arthur spoke in one letter of having led a selfish life. It was only selfish in so far as anything we may do for the sake of our own growth is selfish. He had no responsibility toward any human

being but himself, and that one he fully met. He went from adventure to adventure, valuing the work at hand only as it led onward to his larger goal, but always doing it "in the best form possible,"—a happy pilgrim, his soul developing, accepting the good and rejecting the unclean and unworthy with unwavering certainty, and arriving at last at what he himself termed "the pinnacle of manhood."

Following is an extract from the letter referring to that "selfish life," written in Jacksonville just before we announced our engagement. In it also he expresses some of the ideals which ran like interwoven golden threads, guiding him along his way.

April, 1917.

Y. M. C. A., JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

BETH DEAR:

I received your letter just as I was leaving for Jacksonville. I don't know how to answer it,—I only know that I am very happy. . . .

When I look at my position in the world I shudder, and my heart shrinks. Do you realize what a selfish life I have lived, thinking only of what I hoped to be? Everything has been for self, for experience and education, first practical education, and last that coveted college training which

has been my goal. And why have I led this life, knowing the selfishness of it, you might ask? After years and years of meeting innumerable people, I have had in mind an ideal formed from the qualities I have liked in different persons, and sometime I knew that I should meet that ideal, and that recognition would be immediate. I knew that I would want to give the woman I loved a great deal, and for that I must be equipped. After all, there is one thing in life and only one that is worth while, and that is union with the person whom you love. Everything else leads toward that end, the ultimate happiness, and toward that happiness we all are or should be striving. My life has been clean and it is mine to offer. I shall be able to care for the girl I love, and although I want you to know the exact truth about my present situation, you must also believe that I have sufficient ability to take care of the future.

My first year in college is nearly completed, and while I haven't accomplished all I desired to, I have a good insight into what it means, and it will avail me all I hoped for future years. There are many things I am equipped to do, but I have always wanted to be a professional man, a lawyer, and toward that end I have driven, and am driving. My practical knowledge of business

and the world will, in that profession, when augmented by the necessary academic training, possess wonderful value.

It worries me, Beth, to think of allowing so much valuable time to slip by now that I have found you, and I am lost as to what is the best course. I feel that it might be to go to New York, locate in a law office, and do my best to study and practice at one and the same time. Our lives should be lived together, and the space of time between now and when I shall be fully established is too great to lose. Beth, with you to work for, nothing can keep me back.

The war situation is still vague. I was talking with General Foster, former Adjutant-General of Florida, and he advises me to wait until I am called for. Personally I dislike that attitude. I want to get into it, and want everyone else to feel the same way so that we can get it over and settle down to the normal again. If everybody waits, I see no chance of terminating the whole miserable affair for years to come. I should like to go to the college training camp, but that is out of the question I fear.

I am trying to look at the practical side of life, and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that only happiness will be ours. If you were to ask how,

on so short acquaintance, we can be sure that this is real love, I can only answer that the slightest thought of going through life without you at my side,—well, I cannot describe it, it is so vague, impossible and wrong. My heart seems to take much for granted, but in so doing it is full of content. The voice of the heart is right and should be heeded, Dear. It is simply the recognition of pure truth——

CHAPTER II

YOUTH

"And none in so young youth was ever made a knight
Till Galahad."

ON the Florida University recommendation slip for the Officers' Training School I find the following items.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: One year special student, law and academic, University of Florida. His professors state that he is an earnest student far in advance of his class in academic work.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE: Three years, 6th Massachusetts. Has experience as rifle instructor, target range, etc.

BUSINESS EXPERIENCE: Manager of Seminole Club, Jacksonville, Fla., Chief steward and purser, Clyde Steamship Co., Sales-manager, Automobile Co., Jacksonville.

I wonder how Arthur managed to bring down his "business experience" to three items! He went back and forth many times from Florida to New York between his eighteenth and twenty-

fifth year. He called the Jacksonville Y. M. C. A. "home" during those long years of brave and happy adventuring. Once in order to get back south, and "for the fun of the thing" he ran a dining-car on the Southern Railroad for a few days. It was one of the times of his life for young Arthur, and I can well imagine him, handsome, debonair, and aristocratic, in this curious position. He refused to wear a uniform, and smilingly refused tips. The passengers engaged him in conversation, and he received many offers of business advancement. One day he took the order of a man who looked him over and then said gruffly: "Young man, what are you doing here?"—"Running this dining-car," said Arthur meekly. "Well don't do it any more! Are you interested in the Railroad?"—"Why no, not particularly," said Arthur, "except to give tip-top service on this car."—"Well if you ever should *become* interested," was the curt reply, "call at the address on this card, and I will make your advancement my personal concern." The gentleman leaving then abruptly, Arthur remained staring at the card of the President of the Southern Railroad.

Curiously enough, when Arthur saw me off at Jacksonville for New York, in the spring of 1917,

he caught sight in the diner of one of the negroes who had been a waiter under his orders. Without my knowledge, and after he had left the slowly moving train, he jumped on again and said: "Reed, look after those ladies in drawing-room A. One of them is the future Mrs. Hamm." (An assertion to which I had not yet fully subscribed!) We surely were looked after, and Reed said to me confidentially: "Mistah Hamm am one ob de mos' well considahed young gemmen ob de souf. He got mo' friends dan ah kin tell you 'bout, an' he ain' got an enemy,—no ma'm, not one."

Florida put its mark upon Arthur's speech and manner. One was a curious mingling of soft southern drawl and the Boston A, and the other was typical of "old southern chivalry." Up and down the Florida coast he went in a little Ford "skeeter," all too often held up for speeding, and on one occasion landing its driver in the home of Florida Crackers. "Stuck for fair she was," he told me, referring to his car, "in one of those palmetto swamps. It was too late to get help to drag her out until morning, so I footed it to the nearest shanty, afraid every minute that I might step on a snake or a 'gator. The hut was certainly terribly dirty, and all the family were eating out of one common bowl,—a nauseous mixture of some

sort. But they were very kind and let me sleep on the floor and asked me to share their supper.”— “But you couldn’t, could you?” I asked, knowing Arthur to be hyper-fastidious. “Why yes, I did. Naturally I didn’t like it, but they were so nice to me that I could not possibly hurt their feelings.”

I am confused as to the chronology of the events of these crowded years, and Arthur was to have written it all out for me sometime. But “some-time” never came, and so I feel this must needs be a disconnected chapter. Time enough he had, poor boy, to indulge in typhoid or malarial fever once a year. Never sparing himself physical strain, he laid himself open to the dangers of the climate, and he was too high-strung and nervous to submit gracefully to these illnesses. The most serious attack that he had was while he was acting as private secretary to the President of the Clyde Steamship Line. He practically ran away from the hospital at Jacksonville, and went to Palatka, sending to Massachusetts for his brother to join him. The two boys shared the expenses of a little farm, and for a month or so thoroughly enjoyed bathing, fishing, and shooting. Arthur was then about twenty-one years old, and he had his eyes turned longingly and definitely toward that “coveted college training.” He had read widely,

his mind was clear and brilliant, he was ready and eager, but financial troubles held him back. Money saved was called upon for various uses. With their consent the father had used up the boys' inheritance from their mother. Not only that but he had made further demands upon Arthur's resources, and the boy at this time was carrying a heavy load of responsibility, and a heavy heart. In short all of his savings melted away, and there is a characteristic entry in his hand in a little book kept by the brothers together. It reads as follows:

"Arthur and Loring on the corner of Jack and Franklin Streets; Total assets, Loring, \$1.95. Arthur, \$1.65. But we are out for a killing!"

Arthur was slow in recovering from this illness and while still in delicate health, and at a low ebb financially the management of the Clyde Line offered him a berth on one of their steamships, hoping that the open air and light duties might speedily restore him.

It must have been soon after this that he came north again, and was induced to work for an important detective agency whose Chief was his personal friend. By this time he had decided upon the law as a career, but his conception of legal practice was original, and idealistic. Crimi-

nal law was to have been his specialty. He arrived at that decision after constant observation of injustice in the machinery of the law, and he wanted to make it somehow humane. He thought it possible to meet the plea in Galsworthy's *Justice*. He desired to reclaim for social usefulness the outcast, to defend the innocent and poor and needy. He also had the knowledge of his own special aptitudes, and they led him to the same goal. He had a wonderful gift of oratory, acute psychological perceptions, every qualification for court-room speaking, and for dealing with the human nature and personal problems with which the profession teems. As a detective he had studied criminology, and he furthermore had plenty of the spice of adventure that he so loved.

When I think of the hair-raising escapes from death that Arthur had while engaged in this work, how for instance, when investigating a smuggling case and working as a hand on the Brooklyn docks, there were three attempts made upon his life, it is not surprising that I thought he would be almost as safe in France as at home. He seemed to bear a charmed life. As chauffeur, if ever a man took chances with his car, it was he. He was a most skillful driver but was continually

fined for speeding, and once on that bad curve on 116th Street, from Broadway to Riverside, he skidded, smashed into a brewery wagon, upset the whole apple cart, and created a tremendous excitement altogether.

Arthur must often have been tempted to remain on the detective force, for he received high pay and was wonderfully successful. His quickness of mind, resourcefulness, personal courage, and instant reading of character miraculously endowed him for the purpose. I have never known him obliged to alter a first judgment of character, and he had what appeared to be psychic powers. Thought or mind-reading being out of the question, it was by intuitive flashes of reasoning that he was often able to follow the mental processes of others. He possessed such personal magnetism, whatever we quite mean by that, that he could control men instantly to his will. The atmosphere of a room changed when he entered it; a fresh sweet wholesomeness entered with him, and wherever he was he was the center of attraction. Yet he lived and acted with the naturalness of a child, was very little introspective, and only when he had some definite purpose in mind was he at all conscious of his effect. However I have heard him say quietly: "I have power. I have the

power to lead men." He knew neither false pride nor false humility.

The adventures of Arthur Sherlock Holmes would make a book all by itself, and we were going to write it together.

In the fall of 1916 Arthur Hamm went to President Murphree of Florida State University and stated his case, his ambition, and his qualifications for entering the college as a special student. President Murphree, impressed by his personality, offered to help him through in every way possible, gave him the direction of the University Commons, and by October first an elated and triumphant student was established in his dormitory room of "Spartan simplicity," a delighted member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, fairly started at last on the road to love, happiness, and public service.

Here is one of the letters written in the last days before Arthur entered the service, and left the college life he loved so well and had won so hardly.

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA,
May —

MY DEAREST BETH:

I received your letter Saturday afternoon, and it surely made me very happy. It doesn't seem fair that over a thousand miles should separate

us, and with you, I wish we were where we could talk, for letters are unsatisfactory. However, June is coming closer, and only the proverbial "irresistible force" can keep me from New York.

New York has always seemed such a lonesome place, but already I feel the warmth of the companionship, the friendship, and the love that I am to know there, and my future, which is to be made there seems unbelievably happy. I have often thought as I crossed the ferries at night and saw those vast beehives of activity and business lighted up for the last hour of rush and work that a higher ideal than that of greed and money-getting lay behind it all. Every lighted window meant that there were men working for the one beloved woman,—some perhaps just for her luxury and adornment, but many for a great conception of Home. Love is the motive power of the whole world, or should be,—the great creative and constructive impulse. We will make it so together, won't we?

Your picture, Beth, is my most honored treasure. My room looks homelike now, and I like to sit at my desk. Our rooms in the dormitory are of Spartan simplicity, but are comfortable enough. My desk, though not cluttered, is well covered with books and papers, and your picture occupies

the left-hand corner. It may surprise you, but the whole appearance of the room has changed. My lamp is shaded and casts a soft light over everything. The cold hard lines and barren atmosphere have vanished, and melted into—a Home! Ah Beth, when you trust your life to me, I will be the happiest man in the world, and the proudest. I justify our quick decision by the knowledge that pure truth is immediately determined, and that what the heart accepts and believes admits of no question.

Please don't overtax your strength. There is so much ahead of us all that it is necessary to guard our health and usefulness. It is a great consolation to know that your heart contains anxiety concerning the part I shall play in the war, but somehow I am not worried. I have implicit faith in the unknown, and feel that my life would not have been so ordered and lived had it not been intended that I share it with the woman I love. If it is decreed that I go to France, or elsewhere, it matters little. By that time our future will have been decided, and when the war is over I shall live and work only to make you happy.

You speak of me as "endearing." What a wonderful privilege for me, Beth! I want to be so,—to give myself unconditionally over to that

side of life for which I have longed, and which has guided my course. Meeting you was not a mere meeting. It was a recognition of the dream-girl who has been the inspiration of my life. Ah what a shame that war keeps us apart at just this time! Can you not come to Atlanta when I am started at Fort McPherson? It will help me so to talk with you,—to be near you, if only for a day. If I had one last wish in the world and only one, it would be to see you.

The following extracts from letters written by President Murphree and by Dr. Trusler, Dean of the College of Law at Gainesville, are proof that Arthur's many years out of school had not unfitted him for University life.

"We are proud to know that one of our former students is displaying such bravery at the Front. Arthur Ellis Hamm was far in advance of the average academic student. He made many friends in the short time that he attended the University of Florida, and proved to be an untiring worker, ambitious of attaining the best that there is in the educational world. When he left this institution to attend the Officers' Training School, we knew that he would make good, and were not

surprised at his rapid advancement nor at the news of his bravery in action." (Dr. Murphree).

"He was closely associated with the students of the College of Law, having a desire to perfect himself in legal studies and he was a member of my class in legal ethics, receiving credit therein when he entered military service. Many of my former students have won commissions, but the rise of Captain Hamm was the most brilliant of any connected with the University, and was the subject of general commendation here.

"You may care to know that Captain Hamm was an eager student, full of interest in the subjects discussed, and mixing what was new to him with the extensive experience he seemed to possess. He had a vital personality, taking color with unusual readiness from the studies he pursued, and from the environment of the University. As on the Field of Honor, so here he seemed a 'rapturously happy gentleman,' who gained in a short time a remarkable popularity with both the students and the Faculty body." (Dr. Trusler.)

CHAPTER III

ROMANCE

"Oh just and faithful knight of God
Ride on! The prize is near!"

IN February Arthur was pretty well tired out with the strenuous program of his college life. He was carrying twenty-two hours of law and academic a week, was active in Y. M. C. A. work, and in his fraternity, and had the entire charge of the university commons. For a boy who had not studied regularly for ten years it was a wonderful achievement. All honor to the southern college that gave an ambitious student such an opportunity. If Arthur had made his appeal to one of the great northern universities like Harvard, he would have met with a much less pliable system. The influence of Florida upon this Yankee-born boy was all to his advantage. He was able to realize there a certain flowering of soul that his native State alone could not have given him.

Simultaneously with a succession of nervous

headaches, Arthur received a letter from the detective agency in New York, begging him to obtain leave of absence from college, in order to investigate a series of robberies that had taken place on the Indian River. He was offered ten dollars a day, and carte blanche for expenses, and both the money and the vacation looked attractive to Arthur. At Yale or Harvard imagine the horror of the Dean and faculty body if such a request should be made, by no matter how earnest and devoted a student. There would be no rule to cover such a case I am sure, and unless the trustees sat in heavy conclave and the constitution and by-laws of the University should be amended, no boy could be allowed to desert the academic halls for the purpose of acting Sherlock Holmes *pro tem*. Arthur did not see, to tell the truth, how he could leave Gainesville for so long, but he was actually encouraged to go by his sympathetic and human professors, who thought he needed rest, and promised help in the making up of lost lectures.

Arthur therefore alighted from the train at Rockledge one night at two o'clock, and that is a fair sample of the vagaries of Florida travel. The hotel conveyance had left the station after a long wait for the overdue train, and there was nothing

for Arthur to do but to walk a mile and a half with his bags along a dark road.

"I was terribly afraid of snakes," he confessed to me, "and when I got here the sleepy night clerk had the audacity to tell me that he had no vacant room. As I never knew a hotel actually full to capacity, I threatened death instant and condign, and was shown to quite a good room after all. I haven't a single 'gator bite to show for that walk either, but I wouldn't take it again for one hundred dollars down."

I had arrived at Rockledge two days previously, and had found my only consolation for a wasted stage set in Peter,—Peter, gold and resplendent of tooth, exceeding black and wrinkled, who drove a bony nag that had struggled patiently through life under the name of Josephus Orange-Blossom.

"Yas'm,—but mosly ah calls him 'Sephus. Git along dar, you 'Sephus, an' show de ladies youse got spunk in you yit."

Peter was distinctly *not* a Foot-Washing Baptist, —I should say not.

"Dey's mo' colo'd chu'ches dan white chu'ches ovah to Cocoa wha' Ah libs," he announced. "Not 'case dey's mo' colo'd folks dan white in Cocoa, but de colo'd folks is mo' 'ligious. Dey's Methody Baptists, Shoutin' Baptists, *an'* Foot-

Washin' Baptists, but de Foot-Washers des an ornery low-down lot. Dat guide Ah done tole you 'bout on de St. Johns Ribber am a Foot-Washin' Baptist preachah."

"But Peter, how can he be that and a guide as well?"

"Well he jes natchelly ain' got but fo' membahs to his congegation, an' he got to fin' wo'k somehow 'ner. Don' you-all tell him Ah tole you 'bout dat, case he ain' gwine lak' it. He kinder 'shamed, po' man."

On the downslope towards home, where 'Sephus struck the astonishing pace of two miles an hour, and with a flourish no less of politeness than of his whip Peter asked: "Well Miss, is dezyer Germans Ah done heah tell 'bout still amakin' a wah?"

The next day I had breakfast in bed (never again in Rockledge), but at noon I came in hungry from a tramp, and went to the dining table which had accommodations for eight, but had had one vacant place hitherto. A young man slid quietly into that seat, and looked across at me. Our eyes held for an instant in which my heart gave a great bound,—and all the world was changed for us two. At that instant we began to live, and never knew again "which was Beth and which was Arthur." He has teased me by claiming to have

been the first to reach entire faith in our joint destiny, but if I hesitated a week or two it was because of a difference in our age which I thought might be to his disadvantage. Who can explain love at first sight, and its unerring recognition—what Arthur called “the recognition of pure truth?” It is a miracle of rebirth as wonderful as the first dawn of consciousness, a mystery of the spirit as profound as death, and a happiness as exalted as any we hope to find in Heaven. Arthur Hamm had recognized his “dream-girl,” “even to the kind of clothes she wore—that big white soft cloak—everything simple and white and soft.” And I, fortunate and happy, was that girl.

All through the luncheon hour Arthur held a newspaper bottom side up, and got very little out of President Wilson’s speech—the one that led to war. “There is a way of holding a newspaper,” he told me, “by which you can look over the top of it, and look and look and never be seen or noticed.” I only stole an occasional glance along the level of the table to his plate, which remained empty, and he never has been able to recall whether eventually he had any luncheon or not. He was going over and over in his mind his life and record, his present rather discouraging position, and

planning rapidly how he could make good and take care of his wife. He had not counted upon meeting her until he was fully established in the world, but he found no obstacle that could not be overcome.

A night or so later, more courageous, and requiring no longer the protection of a newspaper, I brought down a laugh upon myself. I had felt Arthur's eyes on me to such a degree that I was unable to converse intelligently with the gentleman on my left. I finally looked over at Arthur and asked stupidly: "Are you trying to hypnotize me?"—"No," he said, "but I am being hypnotized."

Before I met my husband, he introduced himself to mother and told her his name (he had registered as Arthur Ellis), his business at the hotel, his status, and everything else he could think of that might prejudice her against him, then asked if he might meet and know me. My mother, captivated by his honesty and charm, falling in love with him on the spot, gave her consent to our acquaintance.

"Will your daughter think the less of me because I am here in the capacity of a detective, registered under my middle name?"

"No,—as to that she will think you, as I do,

very clever, and like you all the better for the way you have won your way in the world."

"Don't you think it would be best for her not to know for a time, so that she can meet and talk to me without prejudice or self-consciousness? I will do just as you say,—tell her now, if you prefer."

"Suppose we keep it our secret for awhile as we are to be here one week only, and I will call her over and introduce you to her now."

And so I was presented to "Mr. Ellis," and I went away trying my new name over with some complacency. It was the only real surprise that I received when he made his full confession to me a few days later, in an earnest pleading way that was irresistible. I but loved him the more for his story and my heart warmed to the romance and idealism of his life. I was also proud of the manner in which he had solved the tangled threads of the case in the hotel, and I looked at his detective's card with a school-girl's thrill.

"This is my last case, Beth," he said smiling, "I have started on a broad highway, and left the byways and the paths of exploration far behind."

It was a week of whirlwind courtship, of talk and talk around it and about, never of love, but of ourselves and our puny philosophies, our dis-

appointments, and, shyly, of our ideals. It was a week of glorious drives under the swaying moss of the road beside the river which glanced blue and sparkling beyond the tall palmettoes; of trips in the launch that plied up and down, when solemn pelicans aroused our laughter, and Arthur lounging at his ease in the deck chair beside me, all in white and superbly handsome, outshone the southern sun for me.

In my room at night I would find little gifts, just oranges or a spray of the sweet blossom, which I knew for a sign! And once when late for breakfast Arthur wrote a card for me, and on handing it to the bell-boy that small functionary started with it on the run. "Here you chap," called Arthur cheerfully, "how do you know where you are going with that message?"—"Isn't it for Room 116, Sir?" and it surely was. On it was scribbled the then famous legend "Watchful Waiting." I received it with a laugh, and said "no answer," but I finished dressing in a hurry!

That nothing should be lacking a moon blessed the progress of our love,—that love so well understood, and for which we felt no need of words, nor even of the touch of hand upon hand. I can remember sitting with him in silence on the moonlit

pier, and turning to speak to him, I saw that his eyes were closed. While I still looked at him, they opened, and he sent me a most wonderful smile.

The day that I left Rockledge was just one week since we had met. Arthur was obliged to remain to finish his case, but he rode on the train as far as that "ligious town ob Cocoa," and we were quite miserable and entirely happy. Boyishly when we left the train he gave me his fraternity grip, and on the platform outside while I watched him through the closed window, his face became suddenly transfigured, and his lips formed the three oldest words of human speech, words that require no expert lip-reader to interpret,— "I love you."

I saw my husband only three times again before we were married. He followed me soon to Winter Park, taking a twelve-hour drive from Gainesville in order to have an hour's talk with me, and I saw him again at Jacksonville, where he put me on the train for New York. After I announced our engagement to the world, on the first day of May, I went to Atlanta while Arthur was a student officer at Fort McPherson, and our week-end there was all the time we had together until our wedding day.

The letters that follow cover the period of Arthur's training, and the winning of his commission as Captain in the United States army.

May 3d.

Beth dear, I have signed up for the Reserve Officers' Training Camp, to be held in Georgia, near Atlanta. The camps are almost exclusively for college men—they are places where men are given three months' training, at the end of which time those who survive will be given a commission in the army. I passed the physical examination, and while light for my height, I got safely by. I finished signing my papers this morning and had them executed. They were forwarded to Governor's Island this afternoon, together with about thirty-five other applications from here. We hope to hear whether we were accepted some time next week. The camp starts May 15th, and we are signed up for the three months' training, also agreeing to accept whatever commission the Secretary of War sees fit to give us after this camp. If only this terrible war had never come, my plans would be quite different, but now that we must face the issue I feel that we should all do our bit, and willingly too.

I feel sad, Beth, when I think of the long separa-

tion this will mean for us. It should not be—it ought not to be asked, and yet, I know that you want me to do my share—you are a true woman. I am sad too when I think about what the war may bring forth—sad because we shall be separated for a time. But time and space, Dear, shall never part us, and sooner or later we shall be joined never to know sorrow nor separation.

It is impossible to imagine that I am about to enter upon three months of intensified military training. I feel this is the wisest course to pursue as it is almost certain that August will see the United States conscripting men, and I can lead men, Beth, better than I can follow. With only love in my heart and a desire to be near you, war seems more terrible than I ever before imagined, but everything will turn out all right, Beth dear, and soon I hope to be near you forever and ever.

FORT MCPHERSON,
June, 1917.

Beth darling, when I read the letters from your many friends, the grateful tears would come. I feel, oh so safe and secure in every way. I am so glad you can come to Atlanta, and the date you choose is just right, for I shall be past the inoculations that are at present bowling me over at

intervals. I am ashamed to admit that the first one made me faint and that I was quite ill after it but that is, in part, due to the brutal way in which they are administered. Twenty needles have been broken off in the boys' arms and one poor chap has lost his arm from blood poisoning. To-day we were examined physically again, and I got by, but I had to kid the doctors a little for they pretended to find a leak around my heart. Now how can that be with that organ safe in your keeping? I am feeling fine and like the hard work,—it's good for us to hike twelve miles in nice hot, Georgia sun,—but there is just one thing that troubles me. I seem to need about eight hours sleep at night to be at my best, and this army doesn't believe in pampering us to that extent.

Our schedule is fairly stiff, and every minute of the day is filled without any provision for our personal affairs. We drill, hike, have conferences, study from half-past five in the morning until nine-thirty at night, and we are obliged to be in bed at ten. The first call for reveille is at five-thirty; we fall in for roll-call at five-forty-five, and must be washed and cleaned up for breakfast five minutes later. I have attended every formation so far, even hiking to Atlanta after an inocula-

tion when I could hardly walk. But all that is now past, and I am well and happy.

When you come we can discuss the glorious plans for our wedding,—wonderful word!—And, Dear, I feel sure that I shall win a good commission. I was made an N. C. O. on my first day here, and am now a corporal. We are detailed non-commissioned cadet officer for three days at a time. The work is really tremendously interesting, and then it is going to fit us to train and equip an army to take to Europe. Do you think me over self-confident? I have Beth to work for and nothing could be too hard. I could never disappoint her faith in me. Your belief in me is perfectly wonderful. You have accepted me for what I seemed to be, and, thank God, you have not made a mistake. How happy I am, that, knowing I would some day surely meet you, I have lived a clean and self-respecting life! I hope our work is going to make it possible to bring about a speedy peace, so that we can settle down to the normal,—a home, a fireside for us two children, my profession,—and, Beth, listen to this now—I am going to make a great lawyer! With Beth as my wife, is anything difficult?

This is a little of my idea, Dear, you may think it odd, but I want to specialize in criminal

law. I can speak easily, and more than that, I have a sort of natural impulse to go out and defend the under dog. So few of the chaps that haven't money to get them off have a really fair deal. Not that I would take a case I did not believe in, but it would be great to pull out of a tight place somebody who could be reclaimed for social usefulness. I want to make of myself and my legal practice a sort of servant of humanity. Does that sound sententious and unpractical? I know you will understand and that we can make a lot of my idea together.

The wonderful times ahead of us make my heart jump with gladness. The reading, the study, the music! I love music, Beth, and to hear you sing will be Heaven. Ah! Dear, sometimes a tiny, cold dread comes over me. If only we were *sure* of the future! I can't bear to think of you as hurt and worried, and yet I feel that you may have no small amount of both. Is it too hard a life that I have asked you to share with me? I will do all in my power to make it as happy as I can, and I believe that it will come out right in the end, and that we shall have that happy little home.

You can tell from my writing that I am under a strain. I am attending a conference, and trying to follow it at the same time that I write.

I am liable to be called on at any moment, and I like, at least, to give the impression of not having been waked out of deep slumber. In fact, I have a distinct premonition that I am about to explain a field problem that has been under discussion so I must leave you for a little while.

FORT MCPHERSON, GA.

July, 1917.

MY DARLING GIRL:

. . . These are days of great strain and hard work, and considerable suspense. I just came in from a long hike in the hottest sun you ever felt, and we had to do a lot of double time which gets my heart a bit, but I managed to stay with the other men. The only result is a slight head-ache which one touch of your hand could smooth away. To-day the examining board looked over us, and I have been recommended as one of the Captains. My one fear has been discharge for physical reasons, especially my heart, but I have made a strenuous fight for it and it seems that I have won. Had I been thrown out, I should have gone to Washington and been reinstated in some way, for I had to have that commission, Dear. My captaincy is my only wedding gift to you, my Beth. You have been my inspiration and I had

to win not only the income, but to make you proud of me and to justify your faith.

How deeply I shall feel the responsibility, if it comes to me, only you know. Poor chaps! Every mother's son of them is entitled to the best chance of life that I can give him, not only for himself, but because his mother or his sweetheart loves him. First through strict discipline and training, and then through good leadership they shall have that chance. I feel awed by the task, but am proud and glad to have it to do. I feel quite proud of my recommendation, Dear, and shall be even more so of my commission, but most of all when my Beth places her hand in mine, and we repeat the words which make us man and wife before the whole world, as we are now at heart.

We have picked a rifle team, and I am one of the members. So far I have had very good luck in scores, and lead the company, and, they tell me, the entire camp. I used, you know, to do a great deal of military rifle shooting, when a youngster, and it comes easy to me. It has helped me to my captaincy, and that makes me think, I have volunteered to take a company of colored troops if it is necessary. Do you mind? I should prefer white men of course, but these pure-blooded Southern officers have such a feeling against it

that some of us may have to help out, and they make fine soldiers. Anyhow, Uncle Sam is my guide in all such matters.

To tell you the truth, army life is distasteful to me, and I shall be glad on many scores when we get this business over. It is narrow, bound with red tape, and the insincerity, assumed courtesy, and sham of the whole thing make me sick. Yet I realize the need of it in the present crisis, and willingly, yes gladly, I give myself to do my part, and to do it in the best form possible. If only that race we fight had not been so greedy—if natural ambition for expansion could only have been directed into sane channels, what a wonderful world we should have!

Oh how I wish the war was at an end, and all uncertainty over! I feel the suspense and anxiety more and more, Dear, even though I do know it will come right for us. I want to start those French lessons at once, for such knowledge in France will eventually lead to a staff appointment. It may be that the war will close before it comes time for American soldiers to go, but be that as it may, I shall only leave you for a time, and then rejoin my own dear loving wife, never to be separated again. Dear sweetheart, don't worry about the war. The future of the United States in this

struggle is still problematical, and it hurts and grieves me greatly to know you are anxious. God's will must be done, and His work in the world attended to, but His will, Dear, shall never cause our separation. Of this I feel *sure*, and in it I find power to face whatever is coming. I shall be spared for my Beth!

Your wonderfully clever box was a regular surprise party, and I, or rather we, enjoyed it very much. The chocolate cake was bully, and in perfect condition. Golly! it sure was good, and so were the nuts and the cookies, which made me think of the times my mother used to make cookies for me when I was a tiny kid, and I would eat them to the last crumb. So long it is since anyone let me be a little boy the way you do! The hearts were somewhat crumbled, but still recognizable. Such a dear to send Boy a birthday party, and everyone voted it a tremendous success, and the way they hoed into that cake with their bayonets proved it beyond the shadow of a doubt. You would be surprised to see how much big men enjoy such things.

I feel sleepy like a little child to-night, and not a bit like a man who is soon to command 250 other men! Some day we can, I hope, look back on these days, and make a joke of the worry we feel

about the future. But we must have confidence, and now over and over in my heart is one cry and one prayer, you—only you——

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FORT MCPHERSON,
August, 1917.

MY DEAR WIFE-TO-BE:

I learned to-day positively that I had been recommended for a Captain's commission, and that there is every good prospect of my getting it. Somehow I feared I might not draw anything better than a first-lieutenancy on account of my age, and because my physique is not up to what it should be for twenty-five. I hope for no disappointment now. A captaincy will mean much more, and involve more creative work and responsibility. To handle the training for war of two hundred and fifty men puts me on my mettle, and the salary of a Captain will be acceptable also. We shall be able to live on it, and that will make me glad and proud. We are going to make a success of this greatest step of our lives, for we view marriage in the same serious light and are entering upon it with mingled awe and gladness.

It has rained like time to-day, and I was out in it all day. Ugh! I hate to get wet, especially

as I possess only two uniforms. This has been a great old day altogether. We have had range practice, bayonet exercise, and last of all trench digging, and at that we actually worked with picks and shovels. I am some lame and blistered, for it is the first time I ever used such implements.

To-morrow we go on guard, and I am to be sergeant-major of the guard, and also first duty sergeant of the company. It means work from early morn till late at night,—many a night at two A.M. sees me at the office—but I like it, and the commission I am winning will help me to do my man's part for you and for my country. I want to feel myself a full-sized man, because then I can take care of my wife—I love to say it, my wife!—and I want so much to measure up to my own ideal of manhood. Only so would I dare to become Beth's husband. I am impatient to be sure of my commission, so that I can lay it at the feet of my wife. It would mean absolutely nothing if it were not for you.

Soon we are to take a ten days' hike, and I shall sleep out under the sky and stars which will bring you near my heart. I do not know just where we are going, and I may not have time to write much, but I will telegraph every day. Many of the men, among whom I have made good friends, are to be

married about the same time as we, but I am so much the most fortunate of them all! The most beautiful and wonderful girl in the world is to be *my* bride. You ought to hear how they rag me, and say: "Oh Hamm is joking us. He couldn't persuade any girl to marry *him!*" Just wait till they see you! Soon I shall register in a hotel, "Captain and Mrs. Arthur E. Hamm," and I'll be the happiest and dizziest man on earth at that moment.

Oh, Beth, soon peace will come, and our Home—what a perfect picture that paints to me!—shall be a Paradise. I want so *much* to make you a happy woman. *I shall make good*, and when the war is over my really big effort will begin. Sometimes I have a slight fear in my heart about my success. It seems as if I were starting late in life, but then I receive a letter from you, and self-distrust flies out of the window. Life without you wouldn't be worth a cent, but with you it is a treasure to be cherished.

I must leave you now Dear,—small boy's eyes are full of sleep, and his head is droopy, but I will get up before reveille to spend a few moments with you in the morning.

CHAPTER IV

MARRIAGE

"Oh happy world! All, meseems are happy,—I the happiest of them all."

THE ten days' hike just referred to has passed into history for the officers of the 326th Infantry. Last winter they used to say: "We'll get nothing worse in France. It isn't possible." It was always spoken of as "The Hike." It rained every day and Georgia clay covered their wet uniforms from head to foot. To bathe was simple,—a mere matter of disrobing. Tents were pitched in the deep mud, and not infrequently were blown over. To write one's dream-girl was beyond the power of man under such conditions, but the telegraph wires were kept at white heat, and the operator at my end thoroughly enjoyed herself.

Last spring in the course of a long ride in Gladys (you haven't been properly introduced to her yet, but you will be), Arthur suddenly put on the breaks and said: "By George, if there isn't the little office where I mailed you the post-card on

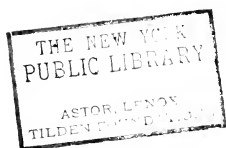
The Hike!" That post-card was a tremendous concession, since Arthur hated them worse than a German.

Just four days before we were married Arthur was able to telegraph me: "Was commissioned as Captain to-day. Will start north to-morrow."

Meanwhile in all the confusion of those last days at Fort McPherson the poor boy had to rush around to a tailor for new uniforms, to a jeweler for wedding ring and captain's bars, and he took a kindly little seamstress into his confidence as to the fashioning of nice soft silk bath-robés and things. I had set our marriage day tentatively for Saturday, August 18th, and was relieved when finally assured of Arthur's arrival by Friday at Westhampton, L. I. The happiness of that meeting after nearly three months of separation could only have been surpassed by the one we hoped to have after the war. It seemed when he jumped from the train that I had forgotten how superbly handsome was my lover. As we motored to the nearest County Clerk's office for our license, sparkling sunlight, blue water, a rich soft carpet spread over the Shinnecock Hills, white sails in the distance, dunes, and piney stretches, all passed by us like a happy accompaniment to the love song in our hearts.



OUR WEDDING DAY



On the way home, a brief visit to the minister. "All I want is to say just what Beth says. I'll promise to obey if she likes." And to me, "I don't want to say 'I take thee Elizabeth.' Can't I say 'Beth'? You have never seemed like 'Elizabeth' to me."

"Here!" he used to say to me last winter when I was intractable: "We'll have that marriage service all over again with 'obey' left in!"

And so we were married, and fervently spoke the vow: "To love and to cherish, until death do us part."

Only intimate friends were with us, and though I wore white I did not wish to wear the formal veil, and my only jewel was the Captain's bars bravely won for love of me. Our altar was improvised in an alcove of the living-room, a beautiful American flag in the background, a wedding bell of white flowers overhead, and the only flowers about us were the brave garden gladioli, whose name means little swords. Arthur forgot his cue, and instead of waiting, came to the foot of the stairs with hands outstretched to meet me, and I—I ran to take them and left my father stranded.

He had never met my husband till that day, and my friends had been a little concerned for me it seems. "She has only known him for a *week*!"

But I knew just what would happen when he came, and so it all fell out. Arthur had a way, especially with older women, of taking a hand offered in greeting in both of his, and a grave sweet deference went with it. Everybody loved him, and everybody said there never was a more beautiful wedding, and yet to our surprise there were tears in many eyes. We were too happy to understand. One of the friends there told me lately that she went home and cried. "For," she said: "I felt he would never come back from the war. He was too complete, too perfect a man for this world."

I think it was his eyes. Often they frightened me, for they had the look that Raphael painted in the eyes of the child of the Sistine Madonna, a far-seeing look—something that suggested predestined martyrdom. It was his eyes surely that made so many tell me right on my wedding day and often afterwards, that Arthur was as beautiful as Christ. Then, too, upon his wedding day he was more grave than gay, for he had not only just dedicated his life to Love, the long desired, but very lately he had taken oath of allegiance to his country.

While a merry group of us were on the lawn and I had only a few more moments to spare before our train time, the orchestra struck into the

Star Spangled Banner. A flag upon a high pole stood out rippling and beautiful against the brilliant sky. Arthur facing it came rigidly to attention, the sunlight turning his soft sweep of hair to pure gold, his slim young body tense, and from his face shone out the rapture of a double consecration.

"I tried to get a picture of him, but I couldn't. I was crying like a baby," said a friend. And yet for us there was only radiant happiness. We grasped at life and joy and service as Arthur the King, when Merlin handed him the brand Excalibur. "Take thou and strike! The time to cast away is yet far off."

Uncle Sam allowed Arthur only ten days' leave from duty, and five of those made up our honeymoon, spent at an inn in the Berkshires twelve miles from the nearest railroad,—a spot I had discovered and loved in college years. Just real American country! With brooks and bobolinks and lurking cows and hilltops ever leading on to more hilltops, until I first received a favorite nick-name, "Little fat wife puff-puff." Fences too, and barbed-wire entanglements, over which I was lifted and set down quite as if I were not a "fat wife" at all. Arthur's physical strength was always a surprise to those who judged him by his

slim and almost delicate appearance. He was all splendidly trained muscle.

One might have thought our honeymoon had started inauspiciously. Our trunks had left the Netherlands Hotel in New York. One hour before train-time, Arthur, engaged in cramming the contents of two suit-cases into one, put his knee clear through his newest and most expensive uniform. It was funny, but quite tragic too, and was the first occasion upon which I heard a vigorous expletive from my husband. "But never you mind," he adjured me cheerfully, "and don't be worried if I am a bit late. I'll just rush down to Brooks Brothers and get mended, and come back for you here. We will make that train!"

So off he dashed, oblivious of one bare knee, and did not return again until eight minutes before our train was to leave the Grand Central. Our taxi only hit the high spots between 59th Street and the station, and there I closed my eyes, got a good clutch on the edge of Arthur's coat, and swept through the air behind him. The gate was in the act of being closed when we reached the "lower level"—(does a train ever leave from the upper level when one is late?), but we squeezed through, grasped the hand-rail of the rear car, and by the

time we reached 125th Street, I found myself in our drawing-room just able to gasp: "Wh-what about the trunks?"

What about them, indeed? We saw them again the day before we left Ashfield, the bad guilty pair, and, barely having time to kiss them on the brow, we turned them over to the hotel porter with instructions to check them to New York.

I can never forget the air of tragedy with which our host came to the supper-table that night and said: "I have bad news for you."—"The trunks?" cried Arthur. "Yes,—they have been checked by mistake to Boston, and James even bought you some Boston tickets. Here they are."

"Good lord,—just let me see James a minute,—or no, tell him from me his life is in danger. Good lord, Beth,—what a shame for you!"

Ten days later they arrived in triumph in Atlanta, and I was able to put aside borrowed clothes and enjoy my trousseau. But as the only purpose of *that* was to please Arthur, and he had seemed quite contented with things as they were, to our minds the independent behavior and initiative of those trunks became merely a matter for boastful pride.

CHAPTER V

CAMP GORDON

"He neither wore on helm or shield
The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
But rode a simple knight among his knights."

HONEYMOON days were over when we reached Atlanta, and Arthur reported immediately for duty at Camp Gordon. This was during the last week of August, and the cantonment, though nearly ready for its vast contingent of troops, was still apparently chaotic. Carpenters were hammering and nailing and sawing, trucks were streaming back and forth between Atlanta and the camp, and recruits without properly equipped barracks and uniforms, were being drilled in the nondescript garments of civilian days—here and there a small detachment of them turning confusedly in every direction at the command "*Squads right!*" and leaning over backwards to the tune of "*tention!*" Meanwhile for the young officers came a period of suspense until the time when their assignments were made public.

To Arthur on that day came disappointment.

He was assigned to a department called the "Ammunition Train," the duties of which remain vaguely in my mind as something to be severely scorned. I am sure it was an honorable branch of the service, possibly allied to the Ordnance, but it was a non-combatant branch, a *safe* branch, and as such despised by a "fighting man." There were wrinkles in Arthur's forehead when he came home that evening to our temporary caravanserai, and between mouthfuls of dinner there was much muttering to the effect of, "Watch me get back to the regiment! Want to put me where the bullets are thickest, do they? Ammunition Train indeed. No thanks,—not that way. Why I could have had a Captaincy in the Ordnance for the asking in Florida. Why in the world should one take that course at McPherson for such work as that? Beth, how would you like a Quartermaster for a husband, anyhow?"

"I'd hate it if he was as cross as you are about it."

"They all tell me that I can't get back, that such things are not done in the army, that an assignment is an assignment in this army. I tell you that I will be back within ten days. Do you believe me?"

"I certainly do, if that is what you have made up your mind to do. Eat your dinner, dear."

"Yes, they tell me an order is an order, and nothing to be done about it. Just wait, that's all,—” etc. I have never before or since had such a grumbler for a husband.

Later in the evening we spoke of it more seriously, weighing the issue, and he frankly told me that acceptance meant safety for us, while the fight for a bigger thing meant heavy responsibility, separation, strain, and hazard. We agreed that he should make the fight.

The rest of it I learned from an officer who was present the following day at the 326th Infantry Headquarters.

The Colonel of that regiment had never before seen Captain Hamm, who entered the office and stood at attention.

"Well?" asked the Colonel.

"Colonel M——, I have a grievance to state."

"What is it?" said the Colonel, his attention arrested by such an unusual opening, and his eye running over the upright young figure and the vivid face before him.

Thereupon Arthur stated concisely his special qualifications for the training and command of troops, and pointed out that it was not only to the advantage of the regiment but of the nation that each man's power should be utilized to the

utmost. And in particular that of one Captain Arthur Ellis Hamm, here present at attention.

"How I wish you could have heard him! It was great!" said the witness to me.

"Very well, Captain," was the Colonel's non-committal rejoinder, "I will see what I can do for you." But when Arthur had saluted and left the office, he turned to his Adjutant and said enthusiastically, "I simply must have that officer in my regiment!"

Arthur's prediction came true, and within ten days he was attached to the 326th Infantry, in command of Company M, and afterward received his full assignment.

To make good was then his great desire, the more because he had stated his own abilities in no uncertain fashion, and because the Colonel had put so much faith in him. A tremendous work lay before him, and he gloried in the prospect.

During those first few days at camp, Arthur was engaged in meeting and marshaling new troops, and it was a revelation to me to watch the transformation of my husband into an authoritative officer. His voice, his bearing, his decision made it impossible to believe he had not been born and bred in the army. The poor conscripts looked hot, dusty, tired, and discouraged, some pitifully

dazed. And they looked discouraging too, many foreign born, the rest with few exceptions "Cracker" types, morose, sulky, and slouchy in demeanor. They were stoop-shouldered, hollow-chested, and the coughing that went down the line was pathetic. Arthur said: "Wait three weeks, and then come out here and look at those bullies! They will make the best soldiers in the world, and some morning early they'll up and over the top, and give Fritz particular Hell!"

With what enthusiasm he came home to me not long after this and said: "Do you know, I had the first sign to-day that the boys of my company have got together? As I started out from the barracks I heard a bunch of them singing:

"Oh I'd rather belong to Company M than any
command I know.

We do more work in Company M than any
command I know."

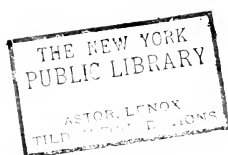
But I'd rather belong to Company M than any
command I know."

It made me feel great—you can't imagine."

But I could imagine, for I knew how hard their Captain had worked to give them a sense of loyalty and pride and love for their organization. He had taken the time of Retreat each evening to talk to



DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH



them about their place in the mighty war scheme, little talks about citizenship which made them feel a part of something bigger than themselves. He tried to explain in simple words the issues of the war, and the honor paid them by the United States in calling them to defend that which had protected them. It was difficult, for some of the men from remote mountain regions had scarcely known that there was a war, and they had left their farms and women and children stunned by the catastrophe that had seemingly overtaken them. Others only knew that they had left their own countries to avoid military service, and that now they were "conscripts," a word that unfortunately rhymed with "convicts," and that they did not understand. It was wonderful how quickly they responded to encouragement and instruction, and how enthusiastically they set about to make the camp habitable and attractive.

By dint of tremendous effort on the part of the officers, and a last spurt by the carpenters and plumbers, Camp Gordon had been transformed within a month into one of the least desolate of the National Army camps. It was built to house sixty thousand men, and four thousand officers,—a city in itself, reminiscent of a western mining town, but animated with a nobler, more self-

sacrificing ideal than any city ever built before. It was set down among trees, which were allowed to stand, trees that overarched the company streets and the high ground and rolling country made for beauty and for health. There was a constant effort toward improvement, each company taking pride in its own street and barracks, and *our* regimental Headquarters was surrounded by a really and truly lawn, and a little white fence. Even our Infirmary was entered through an arched gateway, topped by a sign so resplendent and dazzling that it was the marvel of all beholders, and one felt it would be a privilege indeed to enter those portals. It was the greatest masterpiece of an M Company carpenter.

That same carpenter and his assistants built a garage for the regiment. Aspersions have been cast at that garage, but nevertheless it remained the only one in existence.)

The lumber for these exploits was generally stolen from someone else, all portable property being considered fair game in the army! K Company was well supplied with lumber, which it claimed to have come by honestly, and for a time it changed hands every night,—first stolen by Company M, and the next night transferred back by the indignant members of Company K.

“Don’t ask *me* where to get lumber,” the captain would say,—“Just *get* it.” And the result of that was the company had a terrible reputation. The loss of a mule from the corral was discussed one night at an officers’ meeting, and someone suggested that M Company barracks be thoroughly searched. They went too far once, however! Colonel M—— was accumulating lumber to increase the size of his office, and he particularly said to Arthur: “Captain Hamm, steal where you like for that garage, but just let *my* lumber alone, do you hear?”

It wasn’t many hours after the delivery of this injunction that the Colonel, chancing to look out of his window, was roused to immediate and ferocious action, by the sight of a stream of men bearing choice boards upon their shoulders. I heard about it from him afterward.

“No indeed your husband did not appear around here for some time, Mrs. Hamm. I just couldn’t locate him.”

And Arthur said: “Golly,—I saw the Colonel steaming out of there with his face red, and I plain ducked. I felt it was no auspicious moment for an explanation,—no matter how good and conclusive!”

The officers of the 326th were the first of any

camp to establish an officers' club. An empty barracks was used for the purpose, and the pride of the regiment was the great stone fireplace, built by Captain Parker and his men. Here were held the weekly dances, or gathered on a Sunday morning cheerful groups before the blaze, discussing everything in the world except war. Many a delightful hour I have spent there, always in good company, waiting for Arthur to finish some work, Billikin, M Company mascot, biting at everybody's boots,—“Dogs not allowed” being no bar to Billy. He was too little to be a regular dog.

All this building and planning took a long while for complete accomplishment, and meanwhile, and until the army was organized and all the recruits were in, the immediate responsibilities resting upon the Captains were very great. Each company commander had to furnish his own company room, build his offices, organize company and mess funds, and oversee every arrangement in kitchen and mess hall. Arthur's inventive faculty and business experience brought quick results, and many an enquiring Captain was sent over to get information from him on organization, or the arrangement of his orderly room. Arthur saw personally to the screening of his bread-boxes

and refrigerators. His kitchen could bear the inspection of an exacting New England housewife as well during the preparation of a meal, as when ordered for special inspection. It was always neat, quiet, and appetizing. Arthur insisted that every corner of his establishment should reach at all times the perfection required for inspection, and he seldom gave warning of his intention to inspect.

Though I have often gone into his kitchen, I have never looked in the mess hall while the men were at a meal. Arthur had a rooted objection to this.

"It is a time of recreation for them," he said, "and it makes them feel like a bunch of monkeys to have visitors stare in at them. I avoid going in myself as much as possible, because I hate to bring them to attention."

Their recreation room contained a pool table, a victrola, a piano, a good library, and facilities for writing. But the most appreciated contribution to the comfort of the men was a set of white enamel dishes, and plated knives and forks and spoons. To abolish the mess kits for a time, and to see their places set at table decently and in order did more than anything else to increase self-respect and good manners among the soldiers.

Arthur also invented a folding mail-box, and occupied several successive Sunday afternoons in planning and in visiting the same little woman at Fort McPherson who had fitted him out before our marriage. She constructed this ingenious contrivance out of heavy denim, and it was a great success, especially in the field.

Most pleasant and diverting of his schemes was the "Fritz" that he had made for bayonet practice. It was a marvelous life-like affair, that could be trundled about on wheels, and that had a hole in the region of its stomach, through which the instructor could parry bayonet thrusts with a pole. "All the Colonels were down playing with my Fritz to-day!" said its proud inventor.

Altogether there were considerable justice and reason for the men of Captain Hamm's company to sing:

"But we'd rather belong to Company M than any command we know!"

CHAPTER VI

GLADYS

"He dashed the rowel in his steed
And bounded forth and vanished through the night."

THERE were problems at home in Atlanta as well as at the camp. Arthur was most anxious to see me in a comfortable home, and was finally successful in locating a pleasant suite of rooms in one of Atlanta's private houses. The only drawback to the arrangement was that we were obliged to go out for meals, and he on my behalf, and I on his, chafed at this necessity. I felt that for my husband something near to home-life was needful in order to offset the atmosphere of hard work and barren quarters at camp. He had never had a real home, and longed ardently for all that the word stands for.

The next step after unpacking those recalcitrant trunks of ours, was to secure some independent means of going to and from the cantonment. Twelve miles on the running board of a jitney Ford was the only alternative to a possible lift

from a fellow-officer with a car. As the roads were in a state that defies description, and so remained during the entire winter, only more and more impassable, the only way that we could hope to be together at all was to have our own car. Now it did not seem to us that we could afford to buy one just then, though as it turned out we could have saved a fortune by so doing. However Gladys was worth a fortune. I cannot imagine what we would have found as a counter-irritant to war, had we not had those garage bills to worry over.

I bethought me that my brother, then in France, had left an Overland car in cold storage somewhere in the north. Naturally I took for granted that he would be enchanted to donate this vehicle to the service, and the idea of shipping it down seemed positively inspirational. To Arthur it was the final proof that his wife was, once and for all time, the most wonderful girl in the world. No sooner conceived therefore than done, and a page of history was turned when Gladys came to us.

She was named for Mr. Britling's car, not in anticipation of a similar fate, but because we realized at once that we had to deal with a temperament. She was more dead than alive after



GLADYS AND O'GRADY

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the journey, and spent one day under the care and ministration of Dr. Arthur, who was never more happy than when tinkering with a machine. She screamed at starting, but once under way discovered the secret of perpetual motion, and we rocked up the street in a state of helpless laughter saying joyously to each other that our time had certainly come. It took fully a week to reduce her to subjection, though we placed in her a faith that should have aroused better instincts. I remember one day that we spent at a country club not far from Gordon. During the luncheon hour a terrific thunder storm came up. Arthur put up side curtains but was unable to house the car, which seriously resented the wetting. At three o'clock she went into a state of complete coma, from which nothing could rouse her to any sign of life beyond a low groan. Meantime Arthur heard in the distance the whistle of a train of recruits that he was supposed to have met. Those are the times that try men's souls, but Arthur remained "More than usual calm,—he did not give a single damn," and thoroughly enjoyed an unexpected holiday, pending the arrival of a car from Atlanta.

During the course of six months, Gladys stripped her gears, broke her clutch, crumpled every mud-

guard, broke her front axle and knelt in the road, broke the rear axle and sat down on her haunches, smashed her tail-light, was relieved by some envious person of her spot-light (which was her only bright light), lost all the allied flags which we gave her as a reward for traveling one week without a blow-out, and did other things too technical for me to understand to her spark-plugs and dynamo. In short she suffered every ill a car is heir to. And in spite of all this she gradually acquired an enviable reputation—that of always arriving at her destination. She was a famous and beloved character, known by the entire camp, and honored and preferred.

Her gradually achieved efficiency was due in part to a mechanic in M Company—an Irishman from Brooklyn with a Bowery accent, named O'Grady. O'Grady was a man whose loyalty and resourcefulness on behalf of a friend was to be altogether trusted. He loved and admired Arthur, who, in his opinion, was the only Captain in the army worthy the name, and beyond doubt the only man who could induce him, O'Grady, to go to France and fight the Hun. "Leave dat car to me," he said, "and you won't have no more of dem garage bills." Ours not to question how, but new and beautiful seat cushions appeared one

day in Gladys, and I would not dare to enumerate the adornments and equipment that replaced her former parts. "I have told O'Grady again and again that he mustn't do it," said Arthur to me, "and I have assured him that if he gets run in, I won't help to get his fines paid, nor his term in the penitentiary shortened. Positively I haven't dared to mention that new back seat. It looks like a Packard, doesn't it? Whatever her outside appearance, Gladys is pure gold within. I have told O'Grady that it's a mercy you can't get a Rolls-Royce engine under that hood, or we sure would have one!" The spot-light, which was bought and paid for, was not stolen until the week before we left Atlanta, so I am afraid that adequate retributive justice never overtook us. Indeed we ultimately sold her for three hundred dollars, cash down,—a thrilling moment in our lives.

It was during what is called the rainy season in Atlanta that Colonel M—— acquired the Gladys habit. All seasons in Atlanta are rainy, but the fall rains have their own peculiar attributes, and win the prize. The road to town was in a shocking condition, and rumor, correct for once, had it that over ninety cars were stuck between the city and the camp. It was still raining.

"Major B——" asked the Colonel, "do you think you can get into the city to-night?"

"Well, I *hope* so, Colonel, but the roads are terrible, and one can't be sure."

"How about you, Captain Hamm?"

"*I* am going to Atlanta to-night, Sir, and shall be glad to take you with me."

They departed amid laughter, but the Colonel muttered to Arthur, as he took his seat beside him, "I like at least to travel with someone who *thinks* he can get there."

Gladys became thenceforth the favorite jitney for not only the Colonel, but for his Adjutant, and for the French and British officers at Camp. She was always full to capacity, going and coming, "For," said Arthur, "it makes me unhappy to have a vacant seat." Sometimes when we were out together he would stop and invite some old lady, who was patiently awaiting a car, to be taken to her destination, whispering to me: "You don't mind, 'Little Sweetheart'?"

My first meeting with the British officers, took place one day when I was strolling up Peachtree Street with a friend for whom Arthur had his own private and particular nick-name. I was not expecting to see Arthur home so soon, but a familiar honk made me start and look up to behold

Gladys charging down the street, literally oozing the British Army. Arthur saw me at the same instant, put on the brakes, jumped out and cried, "Oh,—this is my family, my wife and Mother Helen,—and I can't remember the names of you chaps, but these are the English officers!"

It was an Arthurish introduction, but he was beaming, and up went five right hands in the "smart" salute, so dear to the Englishman, and there was no ice at all to break. We were friends at once. "Just got to drop these fellows at the Terrace for tea," said Arthur aside to me, "but I shall not stay and watch them drink it. Be with you soon, Dear." Then cheerily as he threw in the clutch, "Bye-bye, Little Wife dear!" and they disappeared up the street. It was wonderful how everybody got the impression that my husband loved me!

I traveled back and forth to my French class at Camp Gordon, with O'Grady as driver, for my husband could not come for me on those evenings. One night we were driving out of camp at top speed, and were stopped at the outpost by a sentry.

"Look here," he said angrily. "You can't drive down this road at fifty miles an hour! You give me the name of your company."

"Why this is Mrs. Hamm," said O'Grady, "and Gladys. You can't stop Gladys."

The sentry looked confused, but determined and grim. "I don't know who Mrs. Hamm is, nor Gladys neither, and you get reported for speeding, you do."

"I tell you what," said O'Grady, "call up 326th Infantry Headquarters, and ask Colonel M—— about it."

A few minutes later the bewildered sentry came away from his telephone box, scratched his head, gave it up, and said: "Well, the Colonel says, 'Oh that's Gladys, is it? She is privileged. Let Gladys pass.' So I reckon I got to."

Ah, what happy hours were spent in Gladys! The only unwelcome view I ever had of her was of that red tail-light streaking up the street, Arthur, late always in getting away, bound for camp, the glorious week-end over. Many long Sundays we drove about the Georgia hills, just my husband and no other, and often at night we speeded away by moonlight, the top down, the spot-light unwinding a ribbon of road ahead, darkness yielding to that refulgent glare, and trees and woods all mysterious shadows flying by. And such a joy to love the chauffeur, and to have him so easily able to drive with one hand

at forty miles an hour! Not to care for anything because we were together! Dear Gladys, what golden hours she gave us after all, and how considerate she was in her choice of times and seasons for collapse!

At night, the lights turned low in my sitting-room, a little fire crackling welcome on the hearth, I, dressed all in white, would watch for her Cyclopean eye, and as it rushed down the hill toward the house, her hoarse honk would herald her approach, and seemed to me the sweetest music in the world. Before she had time to reach the door it was open, the cold fresh air rushing past me, and as he so often said, it was "As it should be,—just Beth and Arthur."

CHAPTER VII

DISCIPLINE

. . . "I never saw his like. There lives
No greater leader."

THE draft of troops for Camp Gordon, originally from the States of Alabama, Florida, and Georgia, proved a failure. There were not a sufficient number of men in sound health from those States to fill the cantonment. Their coughing made it difficult to hear a roll-call. Physical exercise put them down and out. How so many mentally and physically deficient men were passed by the local draft boards is inexplicable. After six weeks' trial it was decided to send the sick to their homes, and to transfer those who were fit for service to units of the National Guard, while Camp Gordon was filled from the overflow of Northern camps, and in particular from the 77th, or Metropolitan Division, then training at Upton. The 82d Division was therefore a Northern unit, officered for the most part by Southerners and with a nucleus of Southern non-commissioned officers,

retained at the time of the transfer by each Company Commander. The two Divisions were sent to France at the same time, and formed part of the second army corps. Of the thirty-five thousand men that I have seen so often in review at Gordon, less than five thousand were left in action when the armistice was signed. It was one of the best Divisions at the front, and bore the brunt of the St. Mihiel and Argonne campaigns.

Their future history was unpredictable when first these men, most of them ignorant and foreign born, were shipped to the South. It was rather too much to expect that the officers at Camp Upton should send us what they considered their best material. There were more than sixty men in Arthur's company who did not understand a word of English, and for whom schools in English had to be organized. Nine nationalities were represented in the company, and it was a curiosity to hear the roll-call. Their Captain was greatly enthused about them, as no doubt he would have been by any increase in the difficulties of his work.

"I like them," he said. "That is the type of man that I can handle and train best. They are mean, tough-looking customers, regular fighters. I don't need to apply aromatic spirits of ammonia to them! Hard to discipline? Not really, if

you know human psychology. First demonstrate your physical superiority—that is most important. Then recognize them as human beings, and give them just, square, and decent treatment. They know that during a military formation I am without mercy, but that off duty they can come to me for any purpose whatever. If any man thinks I have been unjust to him and will come to my office like a man and a soldier, and speak as if he knew his own mind, I am always perfectly willing to hear what he has to say. I won't have a slinking, cringing man in my presence.

"It takes them a little while to understand the combination of humanity and stern discipline, but when they get the idea they like and respect the system."

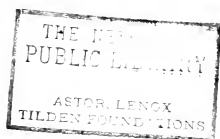
Captain Hamm thoroughly detested an apologetic man, and it was difficult for him to be patient with weakness. He demanded and instilled self-respect in the members of his company, and he straightened their backs no more than he stiffened their manhood.

"Do *something!*" he would say to them. "I would rather you did wrong than did nothing. At least if you are reported to me for a misdemeanor I know who you are, and that you have some initiative. It is up to me to divert your



SERGEANTS OF COMPANY M

SERGEANT-MAJOR A. I. PRICE, FRONT ROW AT READER'S RIGHT



misdirected energy into sane channels, but it would comfort me to know that the energy was there. And for heaven's sake don't mutter at me! When you have anything to say stand straight at attention and say it like a soldier. Most of you seem to be ashamed of your own names. When I call the roll I want you to shout so that the whole regiment can hear."

Captain Hamm stood at least fifty feet away from the company at roll-call in order to enforce this order.

O'Grady was my chief informant on the point of view of the company. He and most of the boys from the North were delighted at the change from the barren wastes of Long Island to Gordon's pleasant situation. They also maintained that in the relations between officers and men they were happier than in the North.

"We are well treated here," O'Grady said. "I hated coming so far from New York, but I am darned glad now of the transfer."

From him too I had the account of the "Cap'n's" first demonstration of physical superiority.

"You know, Mrs. Hamm, when we foist seen him standing out in front of the compn'y we kind of laughed—him such a slim looking boy to manage a bunch of us rough-necks! We figured

we would have it easy. Do you know what he done? He started telling us about a position of the rifle,—held it out straight in front of him, and while he walks up and down the line his gun never moves—for I should say ten or fifteen minutes, Mrs. Hamm. After the foist few minutes my arm begins to ache and to sag, and his back was to me if you'll believe it and he swings around on me wid: 'You there, straighten out your arm! Don't let me see no arms sagging!' Gee, my arm was lame for a week, and a lot of us was on the ground and Cap'n walking around easy like—you know the way he does—all the time. When we gets back to the barracks we says, well we ain't got no such easy mark after all."

Arthur always joined in physical exercise, giving commands at the same time, and was never satisfied until he had downed a few of his men. In his heart he was sorry for the men who fainted, but he could not show it. Better for them, he thought, to learn to endure beyond endurance, to come in from a long hike staggering but with teeth clenched on grim resolution, than that there should be any stragglers from M Company in France. He penalized dropping out of ranks on a hike, and prided himself on having an empty "monkey wagon."

His company was commended in the first days of training because it was the only one that did not fan out and break ranks when it came to a river. He saw the companies in advance separating and hesitating, and gave the order: "Go through it, if it's up to your necks!" and went ahead, splashing waist-deep in the water to show how little he minded it.

It would be impossible to overestimate the difficulties met and overcome by our young National Army officers that last winter. Every feature of modern warfare was a new proposition, and except for the advice of the British and French commissions the problem had to be approached from a new and creative standpoint. It was inevitable that mistakes should be made, preconceptions tried out and discarded, and that the civilian training should go through an experimental stage which delayed results and tried the souls of the young men fresh from Officers' Training Schools. The American boy, especially one who has been trained as Arthur was in adaptability, quickness of thought, and independent action, was equal to the task, although it was the greatest that has ever been put up to him. In particular the Company Commanders, upon whom the most responsibility devolved, suffered impatience

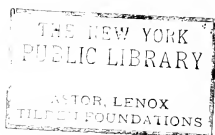
at the system under which they were required to work. The demands made upon their strength and nerve were almost beyond the endurance of a high-strung temperament,—the very temperament that makes the best officer and leader. They had to deal with orders and counter-orders innumerable. They were required to be present at Reveille every morning, although their only time for actual constructive brain-work was at night. They were also required to attend every military formation during the day.

Captain Hamm took his responsibilities very seriously, and the only criticism of his work that I ever heard was that he did not know how to spare himself. He felt that his company was as much under his care and control as if he were their Special Providence, and he never wavered from the view of his duty to them expressed at Fort McPherson: "They are entitled to every chance of life, and absolute discipline, willing discipline, is their best chance." How consistently he realized this ideal is attested by the fact that, although in the forefront of battle from June, 1918, until the middle of September, the first man from M Company to die for his country was Arthur Hamm.

Under his command by Christmas time last year were two hundred and fifty men, four lieu-



COMPANY M, 326TH INFANTRY, PASSING IN REVIEW AT PIEDMONT



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tenants, and thirty non-commissioned officers. To wield that big organization as one man obedient to his will, to make of those separate entities a unit which should be dependable and powerful, which should one night follow their Commander unfalteringly out into a hail of machine-gun fire, and should hold the American line in Lorraine steady under ferocious attack and deadly bombardment—this was the big proposition that Arthur handled, bringing to it every ounce of nerve and courage that he possessed. Who but the ideal and typical American could have faced the task with confidence? No one state or section of America could claim him. The length of our Atlantic coast, from Massachusetts to Florida had been the scene of his adventuring. No influence, no backing, no aid, no financial assistance, no political pull, not even friendly encouragement contributed to his success. The sort of thing he did is the sort of thing we like to believe America alone can help a man to do, and she can do it every time when a man is born with American ideals in his heart, and dynamic energy to send him on his way. The broken-hearted and determined little boy, who went into the world alone ten years before, had reached the crest of manhood and achievement, taken his important place in the great

machine which finally beat down the morale of the German nation, its army, and its people. His own idealism he laid upon his men, and the power of his will he imposed upon their will. He imbued them with his own willingness to die, to surrender individual happiness to a principle of Good, to lay down material life in order that the spiritual heritage of Humanity might be enriched.

“Who fears to die?” Arthur once asked me. “Is there any man worth living that is afraid to die? Life is very sweet to me, and I do not want to die, but I don’t know what it is to be afraid.”

CHAPTER VIII

PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

"And every homely face of theirs he knew
As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep."

ARTHUR'S ways of dealing with human nature were an unfailing source of interest and amusement to me. They were the result of his instinctive knowledge of psychology, and he owed that to his earlier experience in the handling of men, and to the study of motives and reactions connected with his work as a detective. For instance, in spite of the greatly prized enamel dishes, there came about a regression in the manners of the mess hall. Arthur said nothing, but instructed a carpenter to make a commodious square table at one end of the room, and to hang above it a large swinging sign bearing the legend, "HOG TABLE." At Retreat he remarked gently, "I suppose you have all noticed the new table in the mess hall. It is quite easy to obtain a seat at this table, and I have ordered the sergeants to assign you to it as rapidly as you qualify." The table remained

empty, and there was no more butter-slinging at mess, but the sign hung as a warning for the remainder of the winter.

Arthur's punishment for minor offenses was planned with an idea of fairness and uniformity which wholly precluded partiality. What he called a "bull-ring" was staked out in the Company street, and the guilty man was required to march around it at attention and with full equipment for a certain number of hours, the time varying with the character of his offense. He could only work off his time in the ring during recreation hours, and sometimes it meant giving up all his freedom for several weeks. It was therefore a considerable hardship, but it seemed better to Arthur than docking a soldier's pay, or setting him at disagreeable work, which last he tried to divide evenly and squarely among the men. It was quite a sight to see the bull-ring on a Wednesday afternoon. The men disliked this punishment, but they did not resent it, because it came to all alike.

In the month of December the Government sent for lists of the "conscientious objectors" of each cantonment. Captain Hamm chose the hour of Retreat for speaking on such matters to his company. On this occasion he began simply by asking

the conscientious objectors of M Company to raise their hands. He confessed later to a sinking sense of discouragement and failure when sixty hands went up. "After doing my level best to put some fight into those men,—yes it did hurt, but they never saw my face change."

"Well, let me see how many of you know just what a conscientious objector is," he remarked quietly. "You, Eisenstein, why do you feel this way?"

"Vell, y'understand, Cap'n, I don't vant I should kill nopoddy."

"How about you, Cardello?"

"I no likea to keella neither. Eet makka me ver' seek when I hitta da Fritz."

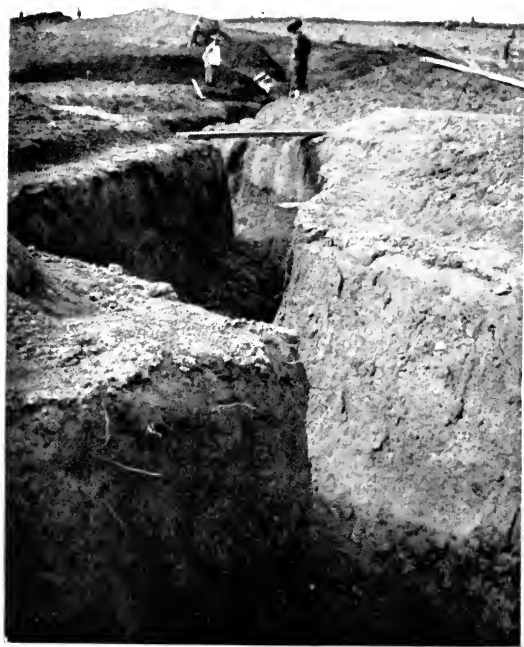
All the rest followed this promising cue with varying eloquence. When Arthur had heard them out and had gathered in all the evidence, he said: "You men have been expressing a very humane and worthy feeling here. You are agreed that you do not want to take human life. The rest of us are on a lower plane, and are yearning to kill. We like the idea. But don't be afraid. The government is not going to force you to kill anybody."

Here came a pause during which relief and joy spread over sixty faces, and regret upon as many more.

"No indeed," continued the Captain, "you are to be allowed to serve the government in another and a nobler way. We are going to organize a company at Gordon especially for you men, training you for trench digging, barbed-wire cutting under fire, and other honorable and dangerous duties. In order that you may not be tempted in any way, you will not be armed. Your consciences will be protected, and your rifles taken from you, for fear that you might, under some emotional impulse, be tempted to pull the trigger. Give in your names to Sergeant Price in the morning."

The Sergeant received two names, those of Austrian Reservists, who were sent to an internment camp,—and in M Company, bayonet practice went on with renewed vigor.

Arthur was later obliged to discharge one of the original sixty for constitutional cowardice. He discovered the case one day when he had the men out for a hike, and came to a ditch about twelve feet deep, a sloping bank on the opposite side making a good landing. It was a fairly natural imitation of a trench, and the company was ordered to charge and leap into the ditch with fixed bayonets. It took nerve, and there were a couple of sprained ankles, yet all of the men went over but



TRENCHES AT CAMP GORDON

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one. While a lieutenant took over the company Arthur worked for an hour with this man, trying in every way to induce him to take the jump. Again and again Arthur jumped with him, a sergeant standing on the other side. At the end of the hour the man was still as incapable of jumping alone as at the beginning. For weeks my husband tried to rouse courage in this poor fellow, overseeing his bayonet work, talking to him in his office, but all in vain. In the end he sent him home. The man was from New York, an east side tailor, pitiful in every way, for he made a real effort to be a soldier.

Captain Hamm was reputed a stern disciplinarian and a hard worker, but meanwhile he was furnishing destitute men with necessities, initiating them into the use of nail-brushes and tooth-brushes, breaking them of gum and tobacco chewing and performing many little personal services for them in Atlanta. He required baths and shampoos three times a week, and the men from resenting this order, gradually increased their ablutions to daily showers, and complained summarily of new recruits who did not at once comply with the rules. One man came to Arthur protesting that he had never washed his head in his life, because he understood it caused "falling hair!"

When he would tell me of these things I used to sigh and ask whether it was a fighting unit or an orphan asylum that he had on his hands. There was nothing that he did not oversee and make himself responsible for. The school for illiterates made fast progress, largely because he refused to issue a pass to Atlanta to a single man who could not make a legible signature. Whenever a soldier was sick he went to see him, and once when the father of a boy dying of tuberculosis came to camp, Arthur gave up half the day to the old man, arranged a bunk for him in his orderly room, and got up a purse to furnish an ambulance for the dying soldier.

Two deserters whose cases he felt to be worthy of leniency Arthur had tried for Absence Without Leave, and the penalty was docked pay. One of them came to him and said: "We hoped you would give us another chance, and you can bet we will make good soldiers from now on"—a promise that was well kept.

Morals, manners, health, cleanliness, and manliness, were absorbed by M Company along with their military training. The Captain was Father Confessor to many a man who desired to square his record before leaving this country. Leave of absence was granted for weddings that should

legitimize the children of men who might never return to give them any other protection than their names. Women were assisted to the position of wife, and men to a new self-respect. The standards of health and decency were unusually high in the company. O'Grady was one of those who went to New York for a wedding, and I shall never forget how he leaned against the side of the automobile and cried when I gave him a warm little coat to take to the baby.

All this work told heavily upon my husband's health, but we both felt it to be too splendid and constructive to be blocked. If he could possibly pull through I wanted him to do it, and to realize that boast that some day, "They'll get up in the morning early and over the top and give Fritz particular hell!" It was my privilege to have a share in it all. However keyed up Arthur was when he came home he relaxed almost at once into a happy boy and the peace of mind and heart that our marriage brought us both was our source of courage and strength. If anything troubled him at camp he called me up on the telephone, and before we rang off there would come a change in his voice and he would say: "Oh Beth, I don't believe I'll murder anybody after all!"

And when he had been at home over Sunday he

would depart at five in the morning, whistling like a boy, only interrupting his whistling to set those batteries of dimples in action as he laughed and kissed his "dream-girl" "Good-by until to-morrow."

CHAPTER IX

FORTITUDE

"My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure."

THE strain told very greatly upon Arthur's health and strength. By December first we moved to a beautiful Atlanta home, opened to us by the kindest of friends, where devoted care, home meals, and bright sunny quarters were ours. A delightful family life was supplemented by three rollicking dogs, a decorative Persian cat forever on the defensive, and industrious Jersey cows and Leghorn hens, not to omit mention of Chuck, the pig. Open country nearby, a lovely garden at home, that fireplace in our own room, and the big one downstairs where yule logs burned and about which the officers found a cordial welcoming warmth, were among the blessings too many to enumerate that made for our happiness and health. When Arthur was at home our breakfasts were brought to us by one shaped like an orang-outang, but with the soul of a Christian,

and the griddle cakes that "Cinders" made for us were surely the best I ever ate. If my husband was to leave early in the morning for camp there appeared like magic on the stand outside our door a box of sandwiches and a thermos bottle of hot chocolate. But even under these changed conditions Arthur was constantly threatened with a nervous breakdown.

Throughout his year and a half of military life he struggled against the mental fatigue of overwork and insufficient sleep. The fact was that all his life he had disregarded material limitations and had driven body and mind with a whiplash. Someone said to me that it was impossible to imagine Arthur "static," and he himself confessed that he had never been able to relax before. His body was hard and fit, but he had the quivering nerves of the thoroughbred. He weighed a hundred and thirty-eight pounds, and was six feet one inch in height. The heart murmur discovered in training-camp days increased in its power to annoy him. He could not rest any weight on his left side in shooting because the heavy pulse destroyed his aim. He suffered constantly from nervous headaches, and from chronic tonsillitis. All these things he carefully concealed from the army doctors, but I finally induced him to go

with me to the leading diagnostician in Atlanta for advice. Dr. R—— protested against his continuance in command of troops, and told me that he was predestined for shell shock if he ever saw the trenches.

“What will happen if I keep on?” asked Arthur.

“You will break down nervously and have to spend weeks in a hospital.”

“And after that?”

“You will recover with rest and care.”

“I will begin to take it seriously when you get me down and out for good,” said Arthur.

He fainted once while talking to the Colonel in the drill field, but the shock of hitting the ground brought him at once to his feet again with the laughing assurance that he was “all right.” Often he came home at night and fell on the bed in a state of unconsciousness so profound as to resemble a swoon. Except to swing his feet up on the bed, cover him, and feed him at intervals, I never disturbed him until it was time to start back to duty. Awake at last he could not believe that so many hours had passed, or that he had eaten, and he was distressed to be unable to wait on me in the many sweet ways that he had when he was well. Nervous tears filled his eyes if I protested against that care for me, as I did when

he was so tired. How many times he has come home exhausted and proposed a movie, or some other entertainment to which I was indifferent, saying: "My little girl doesn't get out enough. She has no pleasure, and I just come home and go to bed like a great big stupid. Get on your things quick and we'll go for a nice ride,—hurry Girl!" And sometimes he won the argument, for it gave him so much joy to take me out, and tuck me into the car, and put his overcoat on outside of my own coat, and complain of the heat of his heavy uniform.

It was soon after Christmas that we had the worst of our anxiety. Christmas itself was wonderful, although Arthur could only get home the evening before the holiday, and had to go back to camp in the morning. Like two children we exchanged our gifts the moment he came home, and he sat on the floor upon a new bedding roll and laughed with pleasure over the Hamilton wrist-watch that was certainly the *best* watch in the Division! Later he had my picture engraved on the dial of that watch, and it was his most prized possession. From laughter he changed suddenly to tears, and all the starved and hungry boyhood of him cried out,—“Oh Beth, nobody ever loved me before.”

In the morning our trays each held a charming gift from Mrs. E——, and the Boston terrier, “Jo,” Arthur’s special pet, came trotting in with “Merry Christmas for Captain Hamm” tied to his collar, and he jumped on the bed with it to Arthur’s huge delight. We ate our breakfast before the open fire, Jo sharing Arthur’s cocoa and dribbling ecstatically, while the poodle sat up and begged for mine with his head on one side, sneezing gently to remind me of his presence.

The day after Christmas the 326th Infantry took its first turn at the Norcross rifle range, living in tents and exposed to the worst weather conditions of the winter. Arthur’s throat was sore when he went out there, and I remember with how much relief I heard his voice over the telephone one evening, cheerful and hearty.

“I have been anxious about you Arthur. Are you warm enough?”

“So warm it’s pitiful! Why? Is it cold in Atlanta?”

“Terribly cold and a gale is blowing. Don’t you find it so?”

“Well you see Norcross is down in a hollow, and that must be the reason we don’t feel the wind.”

I suspected him nevertheless, and was not surprised to learn that during the above conversation

the Colonel had been standing near him saying under his breath "D—— liar!" The result of exposure and consequent illness was that in January Arthur obtained three weeks' leave of absence, and came to New York for operations on his nose and throat. I find a letter written home at this time which expresses all we both felt about the winter's work and struggle.

"Arthur would never get over a discharge for physical disability. It would never do. It would almost be better for his sake that he die in the service than that his life should be shadowed with a sense of failure. His spirit and endurance, the dynamic quality in him that makes him overreach all physical limitations, will carry him over every obstacle, and I feel sure that he will come through alive. If he should not, he will have lived a glorious life, and that is more to be desired than a long one." For me Arthur would have asked for a transfer at any time, but we knew we could pull it through. He was a fighter and a leader of men. His power of service was of more account than our personal lives and happiness, and indeed we could not have been happy in anything less. The biggest, best, and bravest work in the army was the least that Arthur Hamm could do. "Never for him the lowered banner, the lost endeavor!"

I joined Arthur in the hospital for the removal of my own tonsils, and we regarded this vacation as the happiest time of our lives. Arthur was away from military life, and put war worries aside for the time, and we were uninterruptedly together. We planned to have appendicitis in the spring, but spring brought unexpectedly sudden parting, and so we were unable to execute this little plot. In one of his letters from France Arthur wrote: "Weren't we lucky to have tonsils in the first place? They could cut off anything I've got for three weeks with my wife!"

We returned to Atlanta on February first, the beginning of a Georgia spring. Early jasmine was coming into bloom, and soon the peach orchards were to be in a blaze of glory. Rumors and counter-rumors of departure kept us on the *qui vive*, and the schedule of work at camp performed the incredible feat of becoming stiffer. The special training schools in gas, grenades, bombing, and bayonet hummed like beehives, and there was more work on the range for the Infantry regiments. I visited Norcross, and was intensely interested in the city of tents, which must have been quite like the arrangements at the British Training School at St. Valéry. We had luncheon in the Colonel's tent, and then went out

to watch the target shooting and the working out of field problems. German trenches were supposed to be about three hundred yards away, positions to be taken were indicated, and camouflaged and moving targets shaped like men gave an air of reality to this mimic warfare. The lieutenant in charge was allowed two minutes to consider the problem set for his squad and at a given signal the attack was made. It happened that Arthur's company was shooting while I was there, and that their record of shots gone home on both the moving and stationary targets was such as to please their Captain greatly. He was mounted and as he followed the men across the wide fields or came galloping back to me, he sat his horse a very king of grace and beauty.

Billikin and I kept well out of danger, and looked on with admiring eyes. Billy was a new acquisition, had come as a Valentine for Captain Hamm, an animated ball of cotton with a blue ribbon around his neck, and "M Company, 326th Infantry" upon his collar. The chauffeur next door, who was St. Valentine's assistant in this important matter, refused to commit himself as to his breed, and when pressed shook his head and said: "Well'm ah spect's he am two kinds ob a dawg, but he mighty smaht puppy." His varieties



BILLY AND BETH

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were underestimated, but not his smartness. He had taken to the army like a duck to water, and there at the Norcross encampment he would not permit anyone in civilian garb to enter without making a charge upon his boots that was the epitome of frightfulness.

I remained at the Range for Retreat that night, and was amused to see Billy line up with the Company and sing his own accompaniment to the *Star Spangled Banner*. At dusk I started back for Atlanta in a borrowed car. Gladys had brought me within a mile of the Range and there broken an axle. Looking back toward the group of tents, in one of which the Captain and first Lieutenant of Company M were cosily ensconced together, I found myself wishing that the "Fritzes" over there would show as much restraint about shooting back as had those so easily subdued that afternoon. The scent of peach blossoms, and all the damp haze of a Georgia twilight made that pantomime of war fantastic and unreal. I drove on dreaming. And back on the Range it came near time for taps. Arthur too was dreaming. His boyhood days in Massachusetts came back to him, when he had been chief musician with his regiment of the National Guard. His thoughts swung thence by a long leap to France, and to the

trial by fire to come. Obeying some quick impulse he seized from the usual bugler his clear instrument, and poured his soul in music through the night. Mournful and tender, rising to a hint of triumph, and dying away at last to melancholy, came the call to rest. The regiment was startled, and men and officers asked each other: "Who blew taps to-night?" They spoke of it for days to come. Was it a premonition? I never dared to ask. The incident remained a thing both beautiful and fearful in my heart. Six months later, almost to the day, the same notes sounded benediction for his rare and exquisite young life.

CHAPTER X

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS?

"And this was called the tournament of Youth."

To occupy my leisure hours, and to add my bit toward meeting the new problems created by a war so far from home, I taught several classes of French, both at a National Guard camp near Atlanta, and among the officers of the 326th Infantry. This last took me out to Camp Gordon at night. It never failed to impress me, as after the long ride, I caught my first glimpse of the soldier city. The lighted barrack windows, the envelope of haze, made what was crude by day a city of dreams, where thousands of young lives were dedicated to the realization of the greatest of all dreams, heroic and splendid. The pulse of patriotism beat high as we drove through dark, quiet streets, caught fleeting glimpses of young heads bent over home letters, or met a stray detachment of troops coming in from a night hike, their rhythmic footfall all that broke the silence. Somewhere among all those thousands

of boys my own stood waiting for me, a glad tired boy, who lifted me from the car at Brigade Headquarters, and went with me to the little room lined with blackboards and warmed by a stove, where we struggled with the mysteries of French. Had I a favorite pupil, to whom I never put the hard questions? Arthur was once again "teacher's pet" I am afraid!

The men often looked white and tired, but from the Colonel to the Second Lieutenants, they all worked valiantly to read simple French stories, and to acquire a working vocabulary of the language. I found no text-book that just suited me, so Arthur's company clerk typed out the lessons ahead, and we enquired our way about railway stations, ordered succulent meals in Paris restaurants, and even attacked military problems undaunted. The Colonel has told me that he was far more proficient in French there in that office than he is at present after six months in France, the truth being that our men did not need the language even as much as they anticipated. Arthur was hopeless from the start, and the extent of his knowledge consisted of two phrases, "*La guerre c'est la diable*" (most unchivalrous mistake) and "*Je t'aime, femme.*" In spite of the brusquerie of the latter phrase, I assured him it

would get him anywhere in France. On special occasions Arthur was capable of expanding this into "Je t'aime, ma chère petite femme," but that was a real effort.

The men grouped about that table with knitted foreheads and anxious faces, so infinitely appealing, so heroic in endeavor and in the will to conquer, are all to return from the land of their exile, save only one.

My class of privates was quite another and more rollicking affair. Luncheon with the officers, school-call on the bugle, and in filed twenty tanned young Southerners, apt and eager pupils, who took notes, wrote exercises, and made desperate efforts to speak, turning quite purple in the process. We played at shop, and I as a plump and voluble French Bourgeoise sold cigarettes and chocolate at exorbitant rates. The French *r* was their greatest puzzle. "Tell us again, Mrs. Hamm, how to say 'ah'?" was a frequent question. My efforts were rewarded when one dear boy said to me shyly, "Mrs. Hamm, ah want to say that we-all sholy do enjoy the hour."

Best of all it was at the close of that hour to hear a raucous honk without, and to know that Arthur was waiting for me, his Saturday's work done, and a glorious twenty-four hours of com-

panionship before us. Before returning to Atlanta we would drive out beyond Fort McPherson, and visit the historic spots of Training days, leaving Gladys in the fields while we walked through trenches and lived over some of the incidents of that strenuous time. No tank could operate more successfully over rough ground than did Gladys on these occasions. Then after a look at the internment camp and a round-about country drive past picturesque cabins and peach trees all ablow, we would go home again through Atlanta, with a stop at Nunnally's and at some florist's on the way. Flowers and candy on Saturday night were as regular as the sun, and roses always decked my room. I cannot think of all that spring without the fragrance of roses in my heart.

I remember how one evening returning from such a drive we were maneuvering through crowded streets, and Arthur cried: "Look! There is Lt. H—— in his Skeeter! Dare me to bump him?" and how the wrathful glare that the Lieutenant threw over his shoulder changed to a grin when the Captain's laughing face met his. A few minutes later, Gladys evidently bent on mischief that night, inspired her driver to say: "Oh Beth, there go those highway robbers, the Blank Tire Company!"—"Arthur, let's crumple

up their mudguard to pay for that last bad tire!" No sooner said than done, but we lingered not to see how anybody took that joke.

One evening in the absence of Gladys, we borrowed the aforesaid Skeeter from Lieutenant H——, and went for a joy ride. It was seldom that Arthur was really reckless when I was in the car, but sometimes like Mrs. Wiggs to poor Miss Hazy, I "sicked" him on. There were no backs to the seats, and I held on by both arms around Arthur's waist.

"Watch her go!" he cried. "See me beat that Packard!" Up Ponce de Leon Avenue we raced, and sure enough we passed the heavier car. Content with our triumph we stopped at the next wide turning, and waited laughing and waving our hats. The distanced car-load stood up too, and cheered and laughed as they flew by.

Tingling with joy and speed and life, we turned the spot-light back toward Druid Hills, and drove less madly and with deep content upon our way to the firelit room which stood to us for all we hoped and dreamed of future life,—Warmth, Light, Happiness, and Home.

CHAPTER XI

REVIEWS AND DANCES

“ . . . This king is fair
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.”

THOSE Saturdays and Sundays, as the spring wore on, were happy even in the shadow of parting. They were the time for relaxation and renewal of strength and courage. Arthur's thought for me kept him from any sign of dread, and he was outwardly all enthusiasm for the big adventure ahead, so much so that I asked him once: “Do you really *want* to go?”

“Why should I want to go,” he answered, “except as a matter of the sternest duty? I know what we are going into, and that is a lot more than most of these fellows do. I have no illusions as to the adventurous side of war—the so-called ‘glory.’ It is not glorious to kill, go in dirty clothing, see pain and death, and be separated from all that makes life worth the living. But you know that I am adaptable, and the discomforts mean nothing to me. I have had plenty of them before now, and

cared not a pin's worth for them. It is only the separation from you that takes my courage, and that will end, Dear, and we will have all of our lives to forget it in. Meantime it wouldn't look very well for me to go around camp with a long face, would it? And at the last analysis, a man can do no less. Tell me the truth—would you have it otherwise? Would you have me stay at home in the depot Brigade, while the rest of them went across to fight?"

We seldom touched upon the possibility of more than temporary separation, and when we did it was in the most practical fashion possible. Arthur never faltered from the faith in our future life together, either then or after he got to France. "I have implicit faith in the Unknown," he used to say. I could not share his confidence, nor could others who loved him. Why is it that we are prone to think the perfect thing evanescent? Is it only that we notice it and dwell upon it when glorious young lives like Rupert Brooke's, Alan Seeger's and others who have held the secret of beauty and have seemed so needed in this world, have been sacrificed? Thousands of brave men, including the flower of our youth are coming home from Europe. We cannot truly say "Patroclus lies slain and Thersites comes back." Yet human

philosophy throughout the ages has held that "those whom the gods love die young," and that perfection cannot endure upon the earth. A young soldier friend who often spent a Sunday evening at the E——'s wrote me after Arthur's death, "I was not surprised. I felt myself last winter in the presence of an almost unearthly happiness." I myself felt in the presence of something other-worldly before my husband. The supreme beauty of his soul and person, the wistful look in his eyes gave me a premonition of his death. On the other hand, Arthur's vitality and radiant youth seemed indestructible. Under the spell of his influence I was full of glorious hope. I can hear him now saying: "Those Boches haven't made the right size bullet to kill me with!"

Arthur was off duty by noon on Saturday, although odds and ends of business usually kept him occupied until late in the afternoon. He would send O'Grady for me Saturday morning early in order that I might attend the weekly review at camp, a great spectacle familiar to most of us last year, never, we hope, to be repeated in the history of our country. The Division of thirty-five thousand men massed on a hillside on the far side of the reviewing field, regimental standards flying, morning sunshine touching the high-

lights, and blue mists folding the hills behind, made a picture of gorgeous pageantry, which must have thrilled any heart. To one whose son or husband was the central figure of that army the sight was poignantly moving. While the troops went by the General, the men, "eyes right," and the officers at attention, I waited for Company M, and sighted the slender boyish figure of their leader long before he came abreast. He walked with back and shoulders straight, and head proudly lifted, with a lithe and easy swing, and my eyes would fill with tears to see him pass. One of the French officers standing near me would smile and say: "Well now, Mrs. Hamm can settle down and enjoy the Review."

After the Division had passed, and the men broken ranks, and gone to their barracks for noon mess, O'Grady and I stopped at Regimental Headquarters for a glimpse of the Captain, and to pick up Billy, who always week-ended in Atlanta. Arthur came later, stopped for me first, and then attended to his accumulated errands in the city. There were visits to be paid to the commercial stationery shop, to the printer, the hardware shop, and the leathersmith. He was meticulous about his leather goods. They had to be not only of the best material and sewing, but of his own

invention. His gun-case, for instance, and his cartridge belt were a design of his own, and to his mind much more serviceable than anything on the market. The matter of his personal equipment was of concern to us both, and took a great deal of time, thought, and money. We pored over Abercrombie and Fitch catalogs, ordered, returned, and ordered again, and when finally he went across, Arthur had the best of everything, compact, practicable, and durable. It cost in the neighborhood of one thousand dollars to fit out an officer for overseas. Serving the government was a costly privilege.

At dusk, Gladys heaped high with purchases, we came back home to Druid Hills, and usually found a jovial group of officers there for dinner—French, English, and American. The foreign Missions called 35 Oakdale, “Atlanta Headquarters,” and were grateful for the privilege of spending Sunday under its hospitable roof instead of at the “Petit Trianon.” Their barracks at the cantonment were labeled thus, to the confusion of the uninitiated soldier, who pronounced the words as many different ways as there were letters in them. What jolly evenings we would have! Everybody sang *Over There*, *Ann Elizer*, and the *Marseillaise* with impartiality, Major M——, a

British raiding officer who had lost count after his sixtieth German killed by hand, leaned heavily toward sentimental ditties like the *Long, Long Trail* and the *Sunshine of your Smile*. Arthur playing joint host with Mr. E—— would mix the cocktails, and nobody ever noticed that he took none himself. Or he would harangue us, leaning against the mantel, talking well and easily—indeed he was never a silent member of any gathering! He had an extraordinary gift of English, a refreshing frankness, and a spontaneity that was altogether charming. He made a wonderful public speaker, and in all the work of that sort, that he did in the Y. M. C. A. at camp, on behalf of the Liberty Loan in Atlanta, for which he was chosen to represent the army, in talks to his company, or simply socially, he was completely at home. I used to marvel at it, trying to realize that there was a man who had never been to school, except in the world's school, between his fourteenth and twenty-fourth year. He was surely a "fairy-child," or changeling!

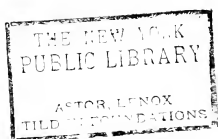
When Cinders was out, we all had supper on little tables before the open fire, and Mrs. E—— depended upon Arthur as chief Kitchen Police. I can see him now, his blouse off, the sleeves of his service shirt rolled up, making a salad, setting

tables, running in with the trays, while the rest of us stood around and said: "Oh let us help!" "Get out of my way, Woman!" he would say to me: "I am as busy as a one-armed paper-hanger. No it isn't allowed to kiss the butler. I won't have it. Run away and play." But if I disappeared from the room he would follow me upstairs in genuine alarm, calling: "Where is my wife? What did you run away for, little sweetheart? What are you thinking of? Tell me, please." I could not tell him that it was of France, but he always knew, and comforted me with his own sweet courage. He never dominated me, but he led me wholly, directed and explained and set the doors of freedom and of life wide open to my soul. I write of him and know that much of what I say will be mistaken for love's idealization, and that no denial of mine can set the matter straight! Yet those who were his friends can testify that he could not be idealized,—that he defied analysis, and could never be adequately expressed.

One Sunday afternoon, a week or so before the regiment left Atlanta, he asked me to read aloud to him from the *Idylls of the King*, of which he was very fond. I chose "The Holy Grail," and he leaned his head against my knee and looked dreamily into the fire as I read. I lingered a little



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over the description of the sending of Sir Galahad upon his quest:

“And she, the maiden, shore away
Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair
Which made a silken mat-work for her feet;
And out of this she plaited broad and long
A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver
And crimson in the belt a strange device,—
A crimson Grail within a silver beam;
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on
him,
Saying: ‘My knight, my love, my knight of
Heaven,
O thou my love, whose love is one with mine,
I maiden, round thee maiden, bind my belt.
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,
And break though all, till one will crown thee
king
Far in the spiritual city’; and as she spoke
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro’ him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.”

I paused and ran my fingers through Arthur’s hair, and he reached up and took my hand, and so on to the end of the poem we read together.

We seldom wasted time by going to the Regimental dances or to the many social functions that made Atlanta gay through the season. Not

only did it seem wiser for Arthur to take what sleep he could, but our time together was too short for such things. Since the three weeks in New York he had been much better and the responsibilities of his work came more easily to him. His company was above the average, and was marked and rated among the very best by the government inspector that paid the camp a visit. The Colonel accused him still of working too hard. "He will come in from a hike," he said to me, "and forget to eat or even to allow his men to do so,—there will still be so many things he wants to tell them. He is a great boy, Mrs. Hamm, with a great big generous heart. You have to tie his clothes on his back, literally." And I can recall some words of the General spoken with a slow and appreciative smile just before the Division sailed. "*They tell* me your husband is a good soldier, and I am rather inclined to agree."

Arthur's generosity was prodigal and universal. If anyone admired something that he possessed, no matter how greatly treasured, unless it was a gift of mine, the article changed hands at once, and Arthur had the grace of making the recipient feel that he had relieved the donor of an encumbrance. As for Gladys, that willing servitor was forever at the disposition of others. My husband

was extravagant in gifts to me, and though I ought to have curbed him somewhat, I could not bear to do so. On his pay-day he dashed to town all pride and joy, and deposited his entire pay to my account, and I had difficulty in persuading him to keep any bank-account of his own. My birthday came within a week of the departure from Atlanta, and Arthur took me to the jeweler's with his pockets full of money saved for just that purpose. "Now," he said, "you must choose what you like best in all the shop. It won't be extravagant, will it, Dear? I believe in getting the best, don't you? You don't want to buy something that later on you will want to exchange. Choose something of permanent value that you can always wear."

I knew all too well that in the back of his mind lay the fear that this might be the last birthday we would spend together, and so I agreed with his plausible theory, and selected a diamond pendant, that he clasped around my neck with fingers that trembled a little, and turned me about for the admiration of the salesman. It was a wonder he did not ask him, as he did all of his friends and even acquaintances: "Isn't my wife the most beautiful girl in the world?" I was perfectly hardened to that. I chose the diamonds because

they were the most fitting jewel for Arthur, clear and pure and flashing, and I wear them "always" as he told me to.

He was forever begging me to purchase more clothes, and himself bought the silk stockings that I never would have indulged in, and sent to a New York shop for my boots, and haled me into Atlanta stores, and to the glove counters with an air of having executed a clever stratagem. When Billy ate my slippers new ones appeared as if by magic. A rain-coat, a cosy rose-colored negligée, known as "Beth's pink coatee" he got upon his own initiative, and so many other ways of thoughtfulness he had that I could never tell the half. It was just the same in France. In the midst of the most terrible bombardments he begged me to have "plenty of *silk* stockings, and nice soft clothes, such as the most wonderful girl in the world should and must have!" I pity the wife whose husband does not "notice" clothes! Of course I dressed to please Arthur, and he never failed to see and admire. He had special tastes and preferences too, and there was one little hat that was coldly received, and was relegated to well-deserved oblivion. "White and soft" things were the elect, and he was able to wield a few chosen terms, such as "crêpe de chine" and "Georgette crêpe"

with superhuman masculine intelligence. His fingers were sensitive to textures, and loved the feel of velvet or soft silks.

On the few occasions when we did accept invitations to dinner dances, it was a pleasure to wear my prettiest dress, his flowers at my belt, and go to the party with the handsomest man there. His "married uniform" was saved for these special occasions, and it was as much a joy to watch him dance with others as to dance with him myself. I have seen other women watch him, the most graceful and distinguished dancer in the ball-room, and have rejoiced in the things they said of him to me. Those army dances were wonderfully gay and picturesque, the uniforms of foreign officers, the well-fitting khaki of our own, the bright colors of the women, and the flags of the regiment held by the "color guard" at one end of the hall, making a scene of brilliancy more familiar in European cities than in America.

"And bright," I used to quote, "the lamps shone
o'er

The faces of fair women, and brave men."

Arthur seemed to me at such times like Peter Pan, all joy and youth and sweetness and light, and I believed in fairies only to look at him. But

when, dancing with him, he looked down in my eyes with tender gravity, I knew him for a prophet and a seer, who saw life clearly, honestly, and hopefully, as part of the great plan and principle of Love.

CHAPTER XII

AVE ATQUE VALE

"Come now, let us meet
To-morrow morn once more in one full field
Of gracious pastime."

MY "Peter Pan" was full to the brim with the spirit of play. He came home often so exuberant that nothing would satisfy him but to pick me up bodily and run up the broad stairs with me, calling over his shoulder, "Greetings, Mr. E——! How are you, sir? Just wait until I get rid of *this* and we'll have a chat and a smoke." Our kind friends regarded us both with indulgence, and adored Arthur. When he turned a back somersault over the footboard of the bed and took down a chandelier in the process, Mrs. E—— merely asked: "What was it this time?" Arthur could romp as hard as Billy, and the two of them wrestled for the possession of rugs and boots and other "portable property" until I told them to behave. "I haven't *got* to behave!" Arthur would say, "I haven't got to!" and if I let him off he would plead, "Oh, *say* I've 'got to,' little sweetheart!"

In all our wonderful year I have never known him to show one instant's irritation. No matter how tired and nervous he was, or how discouraging his day at camp, he was happy the minute he reached his home. If I had performed some little service for him in Atlanta, he could not get over the marvel of it; and if I had left undone or forgotten some vital errand for cleaned uniform or needed laundry, he said: "But why look worried, Dear? I didn't want it. What difference does anything like that make to me?" It is rare and lovely to remember that there was never one word or moment between us that we could wish different. He told me once that if he ever saw a hurt look in my face he would die. He should have lived forever! His tenderness was showered upon every living thing that needed care and protection, a child or woman or an old person especially, or even a dog like his little mascot. When Billy was very tiny he slept in a basket in our room, and if he whimpered in the night, Arthur would flash his light on him, and laugh to see his shoe-button eyes roll up (they were more like shoe-buttons than regular shoe-buttons!) and whisper, "Look at that, Beth, could you be mean to a thing like that?"

For my own babyhood he had the same senti-

ment as if he had, as he claimed, always known me, and he carried to France various relics of my fourth year,—pictures, curls, and spoons. He was all boy and all man, changing from one mood to another more suddenly than the wind veers, infinitely various and enchanting. “Ah,” he sighed, “if the men of my company or even my friends at camp could see me at home, they would think I had suddenly gone crazy. And often on the drill field I smile to myself, and think if my wife could hear me, she would disown me. She would say: ‘Who is that man? He is too mean to be my husband.’” His use of the third person both for me and for himself was almost universal. It was: “My Beth,” “My Wife,” rather than “You”; and he referred to himself as “Boy” or “*Poor* Boy.” “Come on, let’s pity this poor boy,” was a favorite game. All this relaxation into boyishness was his salvation after a grind of work, and it seemed also to make up a little for his lost and unhappy childhood. But in a second he would grow up again to strong and thoughtful manhood, and from being “my little boy” was the husband and protector who would die in my defense.

I fell once awkwardly at the foot of the stairs, and Arthur reached me before I had time to pick

myself up. "Oh, Beth," he cried, "I would rather put my head into a cannon's mouth than have you hurt!" And he meant it literally. For the scratched knuckle, which was the only resulting casualty, he had to rush off in Gladys to the drug-store and buy some marvelous liniment and bind it up as carefully as if my life hung in the balance. His hands were more sensitive and gentle than any woman's.

I might multiply instances without end of his thoughtfulness, tenderness, and poetic expression. One evening, long after dark, I was with Mrs. E—— in her car down town in Atlanta. Suddenly Gladys drew alongside, passed us, and Arthur and I recognized each other at the same instant. He was at my side in a flash, lyrical with joy. "Oh!" he cried, "this is just like daylight breaking through!" And speaking of his possible death he said once to me: "How could I die without your face to welcome me at heaven's gate? My heaven is here with you."

How much more the prospect of his sacrifice meant to him than to many men! His life had been a fight for all that he held worth while, education, self-improvement, and finally, Love. He yearned for a home, and all that the word stands for lay at last within his grasp. He had

barely attained his goal, and yet he bravely and beautifully faced the possibility of losing all that had been so hardly won. He might well have hesitated to take the risk. His start in life was late, and his career, long sought, still beckoned to him as the ultimate real object of his life. Yet he never faltered in faith and courage, and his only deep concern was for myself. Love meant so much to him—so much that he could only dare to hold it as a trust. Life itself he could only hold on the highest terms, and happiness like his was not for selfish uses.

We spoke of these things as the days brought us near to the dreaded parting. The 82d Division was scheduled to leave Camp Gordon for Camp Upton during the week of April 8th. Strange as it may seem, the finality of those orders came as an unexpected blow. I realize that we had, in spite of assuming the contrary, believed some miracle would spare us. It had seemed quite probable that the National Army might not go across, at least until into the summer, and we had a curious feeling of security. The arduous training was a pastime, a preparation for some improbable time of need, for a crucial test that might never come. But the German advance in March had changed all that. The call to America had come, and the

vast pageantry of war upon which we had looked so long was to become grim and terrible earnest.

Arthur kept me in touch with developments frankly and fully, and we tried to accept the inevitable with firmness and resolution. But we seized every opportunity to be together, and he clung to me as I to him, although he maintained always a cheerful and optimistic outlook. It was to be "only for a time." We planned in a businesslike way about his affairs in this country, and he took out the War Risk Insurance contrary to my urging, and it was finally agreed that if I ever received the income, I should give its equivalent to found scholarships at my college and at his. My wish was to make the gift to Gainesville only, but his eyes filled with tears and he said: "If to Florida, then please to Smith as well, for my college cannot possibly be as dear to you as yours is to me. I have only to shut my eyes to see my little girl running about those campus paths, books under her arm, her curls tucked up for the first time. But mind you, Dear, neither Smith nor Gainesville will have that money till our ship comes in and we can have the fun of watching it work out together."

Many words that Arthur spoke to me at this time come back now with more than their original

force. Speaking always as if of temporary separation he would say, "Don't withdraw within yourself, dear wife. Try to be happy-hearted, for if you should not be, my whole life would have been in vain. You will need to break down, and when you have to, just cry like the mischief, but then get up again and face the world. Remember that you have rounded out and completed my life and fulfilled its every dream, and that only the shell of me will be in France. To leave you unprotected for a time seems more than I can stand, but we will bear it better than people who do not love each other quite so much. Make your criterion for every decision what you most *want* in your heart to do, for it will surely be the right thing, and when once a decision is made, never regret it,—stick to it like a soldier." So he who so needed comfort for himself, tried to comfort and sustain me, and it seems to me now that for every situation that could arise in my life, I have some dear word of his to go by.

Whenever I went to camp I received testimony of the loyalty and devotion of the men of Company M for the Captain who had worked for them through more than six months. One said: "Mrs. Hamm, my mother says I think more of the Captain than I do of God! I only know I would

follow him to France quicker than any other ten men." Another, "I am big and fat, and the Captain is slim. I wish I could stand in front of him right through the war!"—"I would go through hell for him."—"Don't worry about him; we would die for him."—"If there is any man in the Company that isn't loyal to the death, I'd kill him."

The letters from the families of the soldiers were amusing and pathetic. It seemed to me when I read them that these mothers, sisters, and wives looked upon the Captain as a white-haired Deity, all-powerful, who could only be propitiated by burnt offerings of large and strong cigars, but whose goodness and omnipotence were to be relied on. Arthur gave as many passes as the law allowed, and more: "Just as many as I can get away with," he said, "for I figure that a lot of these men will never come home. The regulation says no more than six are to be absent from the Company at once, but I have double that number off. The Colonel only laughs when I put in a request for a pass and asks me if I have more than the limit on leave. If General B—— finds out, they can't do anything more than shoot me, can they?"

Arthur "got away" with various things, simply

because he did not care for consequences, and carried his point with delightful good humor. He was mischievously pleased to wear all through the year a light-colored sombrero, which was contrary to the rule. It was a particularly expensive and good-looking hat, and he devoted to it almost as much care as to his leggings, and those I claimed as a ground for divorce, so much time and loving attention did he lavish on them. "My hat," he would say, "makes General B—— unhappy. He wishes he had one like it." The Brigadier-General admonished him once on the subject, and Arthur replied blandly: "Well, you know General, these cheap issued hats fade out almost white in the sun." The General grinned and the hat remained an easy means of identifying my husband in the distance.

On April 5th, the 326th Infantry came to Atlanta for its farewell. They hiked in from camp and pitched pup tents in Piedmont Park, the open field of which was beautifully adapted for the purpose. Mrs. E—— and I went out part way to meet the troops and called our greetings to the hot and dusty marchers as they passed. Billikin was perched on the top of the "monkey wagon," lazy little rascal. Fourteen miles, he said, was quite too much for such a little dog, and besides

he was keeping his hat and army coat clean for to-morrow's review in Atlanta. It was a regular doughboy hat, and if only it would stay on and not dangle so annoyingly by the elastic under his chin he would be very proud. "Little d—— hat," I am sorry to say he called it. Army life is demoralizing! All this was expressed in staccato barks, perfectly understandable by a friend of Billy's.

At Piedmont Park the scene was busy and interesting. The tents, pitched in straight rows so that they covered all of the ground space of the field, made the regiment appear of imposing size, and the men went through drills and formations for the entertainment of the thousands of spectators from the city. We watched the preparation of savory luncheons in the cook tents, and I rushed off to supplement the mess with sandwiches and chocolate for my Captain. In the late afternoon we beheld the ceremony for which the regiment had come, the presentation of its colors. The flags had been purchased by subscription by the friends of officers, and consisted of beautiful silk banners, the regimental flag and the Stars and Stripes brilliant and shimmering in the rays of the setting sun. They were received by a Color Guard for Colonel M——,

who spoke in response to a speech of presentation, while three thousand fighting men stood in the background, a splendid and impressive array. "Colors" were sounded by the buglers and the flag on the great pole in the center of the field came down, every man at attention, and every woman moved and thrilled to tears. The flags were then carried past in Review, and once more I watched for Company M and saw their Captain "in silver-shining armor, starry clear." A dance that night and a Review through the city of Atlanta the next morning completed the program of farewell, which all who witnessed must remember as historic. Of the men gathered on the field that day, there were five hundred left in action after the battle of the Argonne.

Before Arthur left the camp to go home with me for dinner, he and I were standing on the top of the embankment that overlooks the park. He remembered some last instruction to be given and said to me: "I am going to try, on the chance, to signal Sergeant Price. It is ten to one he has his eye on me." He signalled once, just the name "Price," and we made out the sergeant running towards us, smiling and waving his hand. "Isn't that good, now?" cried Arthur. "Price is a jewel; I could signal him from the moon

and he would see me and come!" I like to think that Sergeant Price, who was killed in the Argonne Forest, brave soldier and loyal subordinate, went joyously at last to meet his Captain's signal from beyond the stars.

My husband expected his Company to "pull out" on the following Friday, and he secured a drawing-room to New York for me upon that day. It was the first time we had been separated beyond reach of a telephone since we had been married, and it seemed to both of us the beginning of the end. He asked for a day's leave to see me off, and when I entered the drawing-room it was heaped with flowers, candy, pastries, salted nuts, and books and magazines. Arthur looked about him with a puzzled, worried air before he said good-by. "I wonder if I have forgotten anything," he said. From the obsequious attention I received during the journey north, I judged that he had not. Have I said before what fun it was to travel anywhere with Arthur? When he walked into a hotel or shop or any place of business his lordly way brought such a scurry! And upon the trip away from him that April day I still felt all his thoughtful care around me and the fragrance of his roses bore me company.

CHAPTER XIII

“OVER THERE”

“Go forth and break thro’ all till one shall crown thee King,
Far in a Spiritual city.”

THE regiment sailed from New York on the morning of April 28th, after eleven days at Camp Upton. Except for a few details, mainly about the Flirey raid, Arthur’s own letters are all that throw light on the obscurity that descended like a veil between me and his daily life and military preoccupations. The censorship was hard for him, who was accustomed to talk to me of every detail of his work. But those letters, extracts from a few of which are appended, breathed a spirit of high courage, and went far to bridge the space that parted us. He wrote at least a few lines every day, cabled once a week, and sent great boxes of roses to me from time to time. At the time of his death his pocket was full of censored cablegrams dated ahead to be despatched to me. His flowers miraculously brought him near, and made me believe more than ever in his

omnipotence. From Nancy or Toul Arthur mailed me dainty lace, embroideries, and "nice soft hankies," and whenever he saw a chance to get anything to me by an officer returning to the States, I received beautiful evidence of his tender thoughtfulness.

The unit crossed upon the *Mauritania*, disembarked at Liverpool, and were at once transferred across the channel to Havre. The trip across had been uneventful until they reached the Irish Sea, where they were treated to the sensation of being torpedoed. The shell only grazed their keel, however, and the submarine escaped. "One moment we were sitting in the smoking-room chatting calmly," was the way one officer described the incident, "and the next I am perfectly positive our heads hit the ceiling!"

From Havre the officers went to the British Training School at St. Valéry, making frequent trips to the front line. Arthur rejoined his company at Ault on the Norman coast, and fell ill with the grip, only getting out of bed in time to take the long and tedious journey to the Toul Sector, which was to be the scene of all his life at the front. The period of overseas training was completed by June 25th, and the 29th, his birthday, saw him in the trenches, good humored

and plucky, the first difficult moment of “action” met and safely by—his faith in the Unknown a firm support for courage. Nevertheless his battle with fatigue went on, and he was at high pressure during the entire summer, until he was attached for a few brief weeks to the Staff. He was also the most homesick boy in Europe. He assured me that he minded nothing but our separation, and that was true to a great extent, but the terrible conditions of life in the trenches accentuated all that loneliness to the point of torture. His one hope and desire was for the day when he might ease his heart to me. “The war will soon be over,” he wrote again and again, “and with your strength about me, I can bear to speak of the pain that has been.” And when he had said so much he begged me not to think him weak!

His fellow officers tell me that he was gay and cheerful, buoyant and smiling under the worst of circumstances, with courage to spare always for those who were down-hearted. The same spirit shone in his letters home, which never mentioned danger or privation, never held a hint of heroics, and made light of every trial save his loneliness. Selfishly, I wanted to hear of that!

He was fearless to the point of recklessness. The Colonel tells me that before a night of danger-

ous duty he would announce gayly: "Well, here's where I lay my bones in Hunland!"—"Oh I don't think so," the Colonel would reply, "not to-night, Son. You may to-morrow, to be sure, but I think you will live till morning." It was a running joke between the two.

Arthur's meteoric career in Lorraine more than fulfilled the brilliant promise of Camp Gordon days. His was the glorious distinction of first carrying the American terror "over the top" with National Army troops. He is known in the history of the Division, if not of the National Army, as the leader of the Flirey raid.

Captain Hamm's company and one other were chosen for this action, and trained for several weeks in preparation for it. The attack was made under French direction, and a well-known General of France came down to watch the "dress rehearsal," and to talk to the officers in command. German trenches, similar to those of the Flirey front were marked out near Cholloy, and mock warfare was staged on a grand scale. When the time came for the actual attack every man knew his place and his part and duty. The French government took moving pictures of the training.

At three in the morning of August 4th, after preparation by artillery and a box barrage, Arthur

went over the top ahead of his men, shoulder to shoulder with his Senior Lieutenant, and M Company followed him into a hail of concentrated artillery and machine-gun fire. He held a flashlight in one hand, and begged me to forgive him because he had “forgotten” to take cover. “A bad business, Beth,” was the only comment that he ever made upon his personal risk, “but all over now.”

An officer of the company has told me the story in a quiet way—a soldier’s way, which carries deep conviction with it. “The Captain was a man,” he said, “who absolutely knew no fear. He led the men and they followed him. The men of Company M killed the only Germans who were killed except by our artillery. We accounted altogether for between two and three hundred, but it is hard to say how many of these fell in hand to hand fighting—perhaps forty or fifty. The Captain was in the thick of the entire action. Yes, he killed a German officer, and it was some fight too. We took three machine guns in action, though the other company claimed one. Our man grew tired of its weight on the way back, and handed it to the next chap, who happened to be of X Company. We did not care. We penetrated to our objective, six hundred yards beyond the

German front line, and once when I saw Captain Hamm fighting in the very front, toward the close of the action when things were pretty hot, I took the time to remonstrate with him, but he only laughed. We took important documents, and were able to identify the German unit opposite."

On schedule time each squad of Company M was marshaled and started back for the American lines, and Arthur and this same Lieutenant stood finally alone in a front line German trench. "Before I leave," said Arthur, "I am going to take one more look around for American wounded." The search showed that every man was safely on the way, "and then we discovered," continued the Lieutenant, "that we were both standing there with an unused grenade in our hands. 'What are you going to do with that?' I asked. 'Oh well,' he said, 'lets take a pot shot at that machine gun over to the left.' We threw the grenades, and ran to overtake the company. I brought my squad back through Novéant."

Not a man was killed from Company M, and not one wounded mortally. "Truly marvelous," Arthur wrote, but due, others have assured me to his military competency. One squad of the other company remained too long within the German

lines, became jammed in an American trench, and was overtaken by two shells, which killed more than twenty men. An officer of this company wrote me, speaking of Arthur, “I had the honor of going over the top with him on that raid of August 4th. He so directed and organized his attack that he lost not a single man. My company was not so fortunate.”

I could not begin to quote from all the letters that, since his death, have referred in highest terms to Captain Hamm’s work on this raid. All speak of him as an officer of wonderful courage, a fearless and dashing leader, and of his popularity with both officers and men. August 4th was called “a memorable day for the Division, and especially for Company M.”—“Captain Hamm was a natural born leader,” writes one Major, “he had an indomitable spirit, truly American, and his splendid work on that memorable day, August 4, 1918, is something we can never forget.” His Lieutenant-Colonel who was promoted and returned to the States says: “I saw your husband on the fourth of this month, and he was the proudest piece of manhood you ever imagined. He had just returned from a little surprise party we gave Fritz, and if you could have seen him you would have beheld a most rapturously delighted and a

most thoroughly berumpled gentleman, wearing a Boche helmet and all the trophies he could find space for on his person. He charged me to deliver the best of the trophies to you, and I shall hope for the opportunity to tell you all the things I cannot write."

It has struck me that everyone without exception who writes of Arthur calls him "gentleman"—a word so nearly obsolete in common speech that it stands out in relief in all these tributes. "He was a very brave and gallant gentleman," writes another Major, "and we all loved him." And one officer underlines the words, "he was *at all times a Gentleman.*"

Captain Hamm was thanked by letter and in person by General B—— for his achievement. He was cited for gallantry in action and recommended for the war cross. But to him the greatest satisfaction was that he had realized that boast for Company M, and given Fritz all that he had promised in those Camp Gordon days. He was wounded in the hand, but this only afforded him boyish pleasure, and he lost no time in wearing proudly his badge of honor, the wound stripe.

On August 25th, after his next turn in the trenches, Captain Hamm, well known since the raid, was requested for Liaison Officer on the Army

Corps Staff. It was a signal honor, and a recognition of his soldierly qualities that gave as much pleasure to his company as to himself. They were sorry to lose him, but rejoiced over his good fortune, and considered it a compliment to the entire company. He departed in grandeur for Corps Headquarters in the General's limousine, thinking that he might never command troops again.

How short a time of change and rest my husband had, how in spite of his success in this new work he was ordered back, “needed” for the St. Mihiel campaign, and what he felt about it all will appear in the letters that follow. He died three days after he returned to his command, the first of his company to pay the supreme price for Liberty. I am told authoritatively that his promotion was assured, and a little while would have seen him safely beyond the reach of danger. But all things seem to have combined to bring him to his fatal moment.

No man or soldier could have wished for a more gallant end to a more perfect life. We mourn his cup of happiness dashed down, his yearning hope denied, but we try to feel that nothing less than sacrificial death could have made his life complete, and that it set the final crown and seal upon a noble destiny.

ST. VALÉRY, FRANCE,
May 7, 1918.

MY DEAR WONDERFUL WIFE:

It seems so strange to be writing instead of jumping into Gladys and heading for life and love at the rate of some fifty miles an hour! Letters are such an unsatisfactory means of communion between husband and wife. Then as you know, war, and all matters pertaining to our military life cannot be mentioned in letters, and inasmuch as I censor my own mail, I shall have to forego the pleasure of telling you what a fine time I am having in this country. Do you realize how difficult it is to write in such a guarded manner to you? And when you consider that my whole day is taken up with military affairs, and how united we were heretofore in our work, you can see it is pretty hard.

This country is wonderful, all green and pretty,—a lovely springtime, if only we could be together. Ah but that will come, and when it does, we will visit all these places hand-in-hand. If I arrive within range of the Statue of Liberty again, I shall never make a trip without the most beautiful and wonderful girl in the world! Where is she now, I wonder? Perhaps in New York, wondering if it is not possible to send Boy a section of Broad-

way, the Subway, or at least another life-saving suit. I have it with me, the dear old thing,—cannot seem to lose it. I thought I had once, but it rapidly caught up with me again, and I am hoping to find it practicable for use in the field.

Dear Beth, I seem to be writing like a “crazy boy” to-night, but there is such distracting noise that I can’t help it. In the evening and early morning I get away from everyone, and look up at the sky and stars, because it is then that souls seem freest to rove, and I am sure that ours meet at that time. I am so happy, Dear. Our religion is such a comfort! Just a broad belief in some power that rules the universe, and a firm belief in each other! Ah Beth, to see you for five minutes I would storm the gates of Hell. The loneliest boy in the world is writing this letter, and I cannot help thinking all the time how cruel it was that war had to come at just this time, and cause us so much sorrow and anxiety.

History after the war is over will tell wonderful tales of our troops, poor fellows,—little of the glorious side of war do they see, yet they fight to the death. A British officer (nice chap too, only he gets on my nerves by saying that he is “jolly well fed up on the war, what?”) told me that the man who got wounded and sent home in the first

scrap was the lucky fellow. I am lucky, Dear, and always have been, but my good luck this time won't even permit me to be wounded. I shall come through without a scratch and will have nothing but trying memories to show for it all when next I put on civilians.

The wonderful times together which are rightfully ours shall and must come true, and the present distance between us is only temporary. Did we realize what separation meant? No, yet now the whole curse of it and of war has been forced upon us. Sherman was a very mild spoken gentleman.

It is ten o'clock here, five in New York, and we are writing and thinking of each other. You are always closest at this time, and it makes me oh so happy. Only don't worry and fret about Boy! He is so comfortable and so safe it's pitiful, and he hopes for a speedy return to his dear beautiful home.

Goodnight, dear little girl. I love you with all the heart of a soldier.

IN THE FIELD,
May 15th.

MY DEAR BETH, MY WIFE:

I have not been able to write every day lately because I have been ill with the grip, not badly

and soon “Little Boy Blue” will be on the go again. Don’t worry, little sweetheart. I would not even mention it but for our compact to tell all ills, however small. I am in a very nice round tent, like those you saw at Norcross, and I am all by myself except for my Beth. Her picture watches over me and cares for me, and we have great chats—all love and happiness.

The tent is located on a little plateau, just large enough for it, and about a mile from the sea—a truly beautiful spot. My tripod wash-stand, my precious rubber tub (you may be sure it is priceless, and that I use it freely), buckets and basin, and little stand, a table for your picture, and a desk—crude perhaps, but comfortable—my cot, sleeping bag, and nice gray blankets, and little girl’s steamer rug, a cross-bar on the tent-pole to support a clothes rack, pistol, glasses, and small necessities of life, quite fill the tent. What an inventory! And at that I did not mention the bathing-suit right at the head of my cot!

I just made some chocolate and used your baby spoon to mix it. Dear little baby Bethlee! Most of the Whitman’s chocolate is used, but so many things keep coming from Beth. All the magazines and joke papers are here, and I have been lying in bed reading and enjoying them to the limit. Best

of all with them came a letter. I spend all my time these days looking at your letters and pictures. I always have with me several in my money belt, the one in my identification locket, and the dear one on the dial of my watch. They shall go with me always in trench or dugout or "over the top." Your big picture wants to talk to me, but doesn't seem to know where to begin. Just took another spoonful of chocolate, same little spoon my little girl used to use. I loved her then—oh many, many years ago. Beth just spoke right up, looked across from her frame and said: "Stingy! Why don't you give *me* some chocolate?" Poor neglected Girl! I'll bump my head on the floor of my tent for penance, or maybe hold my breath. Oh no that would never do, for Beth might then hold *hers*, and frighten me to death.

Colonel M—— came in to see me this afternoon. He is a dear. I am really all well now. Just ached in my back, my head, my legs, and my arms, but outside of that I was all right!

Ah Beth, I have been thinking,—soon I shall have the chance to fire shots for freedom's cause. In all I do you are to be my inspiration. You come to me when all other love seems banished from the world. Is it possible that we have been transferred from our earth to Mars? Destruction is

rife—primitive man reigns. What a world, what a life! Where is the God to whom so many pray? What does He think of it all? What can He think of this mad world, this mad race which has forced *us* to madness? Poor mankind, made wretched by their own folly and selfish greed!

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE,
May 23d.

DEAR LITTLE FAT PUFF-PUFF WIFE:

Maybe you and Billikin will be hurrying and puffing after poor boy soon. Poor little Billikin, too bad he can't bite Germans. He would do very well on a diet of Hun-meat. Lucky little doggie for he has Beth to play with.

I am feeling rather cross to-day, and sorry for this poor little lonely girl and boy. May the curse of everyone rest upon the head of the Hun! I pity anyone of his tribe that happens across my path to-day. They are the cause of all our loneliness and separation. I hate 'em!

Your picture is smiling at my outburst—the one you first sent me while I was at the University. What a wonderful day that was! It turned my bare room into a palace, and it was then more dear than a king's ransom. Now it turns my billet into something as near home as I shall know until I actually see and touch my Beth.

My orderly just came in and interrupted me with a message. He is Dunham, who sometimes drove the car for you in Atlanta, and he is a fine boy, and takes great care of me and my clothes. He is faithful, a good soldier, and will make a fighter. He is, however, some expense to me, for he will bring me extra sweets and delicacies, and the cost of everything is terrible. This time he brought me a letter from my wife. Your letters are an inspiration. Sometimes I feel a little blue and discouraged, but your letters always make me take hold of things and go to work with a new determination.

We are working hard, and it is all very interesting,—wish I could tell you all about it. Sometimes we see something of a show, but mostly we are occupied with Archie. Now Archie is the nickname we give the anti-airplane gun. Poor Archie, I wish he would cease his yelling for a time. Not that I care a particular damn, but it seems such a waste of good money. The ammunition for him must be especially cheap, or else there is graft in it somewhere. He fires and never hits, but I assure you he does his best. He has my sympathy. No harder working chap is in the army, but his successes are so few. He means well though! One of them lately lost his nasal

organ, and I now have the nose of a three-incher for a paper-weight. Luck to him (he is yelling this minute) but I fear he is doomed to failure. Archie treats friend and foe alike, and once he opens his lungs and commences to speak, wise men flee. Fools and others remain—to be perhaps carried away.

Civilization is a strange thing, Beth. It has taken thousands of years to build it up to the state where we had begun to respect life, individual rights, and property, and in a single moment we retrograde to the primitive being, living to kill—the scientific art of destruction is our profession. Oh what a world! So close to the canvas of war as we are it is hard to keep in mind the big underlying principles,—to realize that constructive work cannot go on until this business of meeting brute force with brute force has been accomplished. Not that from one standpoint the war is half bad, for as long as it lasts the Germans can be killed without question. I fear that after the war the soft-hearted and those who have neither taken part in the fight nor had their loved ones in it, will look upon the Hun as a human being, and permit him to thrive. He should be ostracized and segregated from all honest and honorable men. You remember that

I left the States without any particular feeling of animosity, only determined to do my duty as man and soldier. Now I have seen the havoc the Boches have made, and I hate them.

But oh Beth, it is the separation from you that I will want to settle for when "peace with victory" comes! If only Love, not Hate, could rule the world, could reign supreme everywhere! I went a day or so ago to see a beautiful cathedral (Amiens?) partly destroyed by German shell fire, only one of many acts of wanton destruction. Oh well, Fritz is on his last legs, and M Company will knock those out as soon as we get the opportunity.

Must run along to my work, Beth dear, so I will leave you for a time, and write again to-night.

Your lonely husband,

ARTHUR.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE,
June 13th.

MY DEAR LITTLE GIRL,

I just had a soul feast,—three dear sweet letters from my wife! First, dear little "Bef," don't worry about Boy getting hurt. Nassy old Hun won't dare hurt him, 'cause it would make his little girl so mad she'd scratch his eyes out! Just don't be anxious, Dear. If my usual good luck follows me, surely nothing can hurt me. I shall be all

right, and will return to you some day. Could the Great Guide of our destiny decree otherwise? Oh my Dear, let us hope that we have nothing greater to face than this separation. Only one burden could be heavier, and that must never happen. Then again, my greatest protection is the love my wife has placed about me—invisible, yes, but the most powerful force in the world. Such a wonderful blessing dear Beth, no man has ever known before.

Beth, never forget, you have rounded out my life. All my dreams came true when I saw you, and you gave me your love. You are my guiding star. If only I could write it, but ah, you do know, and you are thinking this minute of your husband, who needs you so much. I try to do my work and do it well, but only the shell of Arthur is here.

Now for myself. I am up and feeling extremely fine. Went out on a hike with the men to-day, and although a little weak and shaky I came through in fine shape. What do you suppose is my greatest material hardship? The lack of good drinking water. I don't like wine or beer or cider—horrid old liquor. These people don't eat to live, they drink to live. Our company mess is very good, but terribly expensive, and even at that I don't anticipate having the gout soon. A little

cookie about the size of a lady finger, costs thirty centimes, an orange anywhere from half a franc to a franc, and poor at that, and chocolate of a quality innocuous to the digestion, I wouldn't dare say how much. Altogether tea and a little jam three times a day, with, on rare occasions, a dietetic lunch thrown in, is no fare for husky Sammies, and I begin to fear for the lives of some healthy looking lambs that come up to the camp site every day.

Poor Boy always hungry. Let's have a nice big dish of scrambled eggs to-night, 'cause my wife is the best scrambler of eggs in the world, so she is. She can fry 'em also on the top side—perhaps—but of that I am not so sure.

Old bathing-suit back the other day after my final effort to lose it. Here it is in its favorite nook, at the head of my cot, all cosy and comfy in its nice warm bag. But, little girl, much as I would like to go on talking to you, I am busy to-night and must leave you for a time. Soon we are to move about 150 miles hence. "Where do we go from here," Girl? Oh, I don't know, but I have my idea. Good-night, Dear. It is the hour we love best, and I am happy in the knowledge that my wife is near in spirit in this very tent, looking over her husband's shoulder.

June 19, 1918.

MY DARLING WIFE,

Your letter with the enclosure of an editorial from the —— has just come. When people like that talk about the war, don't listen to them. They talk theory, and I for one am sick and tired of the work. All of us are ready and anxious to fight, but not for the sake of fighting, let me assure the world in general! We want to fight because it is in the biggest cause this poor old planet has ever known, and also because we know that every step forward is a step towards peace, and that peace means Home and Love. We have no time for much speculation, and we know that much talk will not win the war. We Americans are fighting men, and good ones at that,—or at least so says the German who has met us. Go on telling me that you hope for a short war. It is the inspiration we most need,—that soon, soon we shall return to all that we love on earth. They need not worry, those whose only interest in the war is to seek fame or money. We won't give up until the world is made safe from the Hun. Just give us ammunition and *planes* and we will do the rest.

We have moved a long distance, Dear, and have had to send away everything but the barest necessities. I am writing late at night with my station-

ery case for a desk against my knees, and by the glow of one candle. It is a big French bed with many thicknesses of blankets, sheets, yes, and white, but of doubtful quality. Everything is nice and clean, and the climax is a red comforter, not much warmth to it, but RED. There are many shades and degrees of that hue, but this is the red that makes the ire of a bull register high. I have also a door leading out onto a small balcony, the blinds of which are shut so that the light cannot be seen from the street. There are huge wardrobes and a mirror over the mantel which supports an old-fashioned clock. It ticks the time of day, and strikes the hours and half-hours with great regularity. All the chairs are straight-backed and covered with red plush, and the sofa is old rose with many yards of lace draped over its dim façade. Not a bad place after all,—*but*——

We are more than ever curtailed in our references to war in our letters, and it is just as well, for I cannot think of it while I am writing to my wife. The guns make too much noise anyhow. We hear them rumble from here, far distant still but continuous and once in awhile along comes one that sounds like the Congressional Limited on its way south, making up its time. I just tried to get away from it all and closed my eyes and dreamed

of that time soon to come when the war will be over, and we can be once more happy. I want it so! Please don't think me weak in courage for writing as I do. My heart must be emptied, and to whom can it turn but Beth?

Candle most gone—sputtering like——! All dark now, all dark. Good-night——

AT THE FRONT,
June 9, 1918.

HELLO LITTLE GIRL-WIFE! Boy just received a most wonderful birthday box, a box so full of love that it most burst open before it got to me. The miniature is the most beautiful of all, and all the little verses are so cute. My wife is so talented it's pitiful! Oh, what a dream of a pipe! and many a happy dream shall I have while I am smoking it, dreams of love and home; and after the war is over, I shall smoke the same pipe, seated at the feet of my Beth, and between puffs tell her of the days and nights spent in the war zone, days and nights of a separation that is terrible—pure and simple Hell is life without you—but never to be endured again. I have the fine new knife and the shaving set. Billikin is a dear little dog to send me his likeness—cute little Billikin—wish I could see him for that would mean I was with You, and the Great Ruler knows that that is all I want of

heaven. Mother Helen's candy too, surely made a hit. Real candy—ye gods!

Oh my Dear, "Arfur" is so lonely. Never mind, next year we will be together to celebrate the most Wonderful Birthday ever known, April 5th. Oh for one day, one hour with you! I was just thinking of our operations last winter, and the only three weeks solid we ever had together. Weren't we lucky to have tonsils in the first place? They could cut off anything I've got for three weeks with my Wife!

I celebrated my birthday by looking over a very pretty section of trench, from which you may judge that we are considerably nearer the racket. I don't mind it at all—at least not to any mentionable extent. I feel like a small boy in a thunder shower—I don't mind the flash, but the noise is a little disagreeable. Yes, dear Girl, this is a very quiet sector—so they say. Seriously it is, Dear, and you need feel no anxiety. I keep to our agreement to tell you the truth always, so far as the censorship permits. Our regiment is all together again, as is also the Brigade and the Division. We like the French, both officers and men alike, but instead of continual "Bah Joves" we get "Vin rouge ou vin blanc?" Oh, I am an American, first, last, and all the time!

The company seems in great condition, and will make a good showing I think—plenty of enthusiasm and dash in them. To be “in action” is not half as bad as it is painted, dear little girl, I truly mean it. And then soon we will all be coming home on Mr. Ford’s peace ship, and will have forgotten all about the whole affair. What wonderful tales the men of the Quartermaster department will have to tell! They see so much, and we so little. Would you have liked to have a Quartermaster for a husband, Dear? Oh Beth, you are a true wife, and in this terrible sacrifice you stand with me and are all my inspiration. It is sad for you, don’t I know it all? But you would not have it otherwise, that I know. It’s all a game Dear. All we have to do is fight, and that being a natural instinct requires little encouragement. I am safe and happy and well, so never worry!

Some kind aviators are flying overhead, and my poor friend Archie is back on the job, trying to hit them. The whizz of shrapnel makes for anything but a coherent letter.

Little curl in my money belt has just been out talking the situation over, and we agree that we are lonesome, but you must not gather from that that curl is not brave. It is, I assure you, and not even shell fire can bother it. That is not strange either,

for the shells seldom hit anything. I wish I could tell you more, for I know you too are brave, and want to be here with me, for you and I are taking part together in this struggle for democracy. Then too the thing known is often easier to bear than the thing imagined. Poor little Girl, my Beth. Just think of me as a very happy lucky Boy—and now good-night. Let us hope and pray always for the day of our reunion.

FRANCE, July 17th.

DEAREST LITTLE WIFE,

And how does Little Bethlee feel this nice sunny morning? It is warm here, sunny and bright, with blue skies like somebody's eyes. I am located in a pretty little French village, or rather what used to be one—there is hardly a single building that hasn't suffered from shell fire, some so severely that they are not buildings at all. My company is the only one in this town, and I am the senior military power, guarding military depots and holding a line of reserve trench—a very fine job. Up until a month ago there were six thousand inhabitants living here, but they have all moved out for one reason or another—can't imagine why. Over four thousand shells have fallen here in two months.

I have the finest dugout you can imagine, formerly occupied by the Engineers, so you can imagine what a bully place it is. There are five different compartments, and plenty of room for all my officers, and we wouldn't at all mind fighting out the rest of the war here. When Fritz shells, I sit inside and enjoy the fun. It is not one of those underground affairs. I can see daylight from the front, which faces away from the enemy, and I have a nice door and window on the outside all protected from splinters and shrapnel. There is nothing to fear, no danger, and I am lucky to have been sent here.

The other day I was sitting with good old P—— of the Machine-Gun Company—remember him?—in a front trench, and he and two or three other chaps started kidding me about my wife. P—— said: “Did you know that Hamm here actually persuaded an attractive girl to marry him? How do you suppose he ever managed it?” At that precise moment some Boche airplanes appeared overhead and as we were directly in the path of the yapping Archies, we adjourned the discussion until another time, and took to our heels and our dugouts. That sort of thing is not conducive to a calm discussion of home and wife, though I was quite ready to agree with Parker. But, oh dear

wonderful girl, how my heart aches for you. I am so lonely, and long for the war to be over. I believe I am as patriotic as any officer in the Allied Army, but I hate war. It is a terrible business, and not a gentleman's game—yet we must see it to the finish. Nassy old war, so it is. Poor girl, and poor boy, both want each other. I am not unhappy in any other way, Dear, but I want my wife, and I want her “too sweet” as Froggie says. Don't know how to spell it but that's what it sounds like. Oh how I hate the Hun!

Soon I hope to make some “Good Huns,”—dead ones. When America comes to life, then good-bye Jerry! Chateau-Thierry is only a beginner.

I haven't had any sleep for three nights, and my eyes burn a little, but I am feeling fine. I had to spend one whole night on flat cars, traveling thirty miles, but that was the only thing that really got a little on my nerves. I picked some pretty pansies for you to-day, and am slipping them in this letter with a kiss on each one. Please, Little Irish girl, talk Irish to me to-night,—please, please! Oh soon all that will come again.

P. S. Curl says to tell you she is lonely but not neglected.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE,
August 5, 1918.

. . . . I am sending you a present by Colonel Rowell, who left yesterday for the States to train a regiment, and later to bring it back here. Guess what I sent? No, you are wrong! It is a German non-commissioned officer's belt and bayonet. How did I get it? From Fritz. And where is he? Where all Germans should be. Have the belt made into one for yourself; the buckle, engraved with the Hohenzollern arms, and with the legend "Gott mit uns" is very good, and it is a real souvenir. You can tell anyone who asks that it was not purchased in a shop, but is the real stuff. . . . Oh Beth, poor Fritz, poor old Hun! I *had* to do it, Dear. You understand, don't you? It was a measure of self-preservation, and one thing we can be sure of—he is a good Hun now.

B—— and I were chosen to make a raid, and have been training for some time in preparation for it. It was the first of its kind not only in the Division but in the entire National Army. It was a regular show, "Over the Top," Guy Empey stuff with all the trimmings—box barrage by artillery and machine guns, and leaping barrage to follow. Well we went to it, and Fritz is in a bad way. He won't soon forget what M Company did to him!

I am afraid "Kamerad" did the poor chaps no good with that crowd. I am not surprised that the German says the American is a savage and ferocious fighter, for he has reason to know it. I told my men that I would give them five hundred francs for the first machine gun taken in action, and I paid out the money joyfully to-day, and the gun is in the Colonel's office. I took one machine gun myself, cutting it loose with the bowie knife that you gave me, and which I keep in the top of my boot. I also brought the Colonel a nice helmet, the first we have taken.

Imagine me Beth dear, going out across No-Man's land in the nice raincoat you remember, now torn to shreds by German barbed wire, "nassy old tin hat" on my head and my gun held pretty steady to defend Beth and Arthur. In my other hand I held an electric flash above my head, so that the men could better follow me, and I forgot to take cover, but what of that? I am perfectly safe, Dear. The Supreme Being that rules our destiny could never take me from my little girl, and my wife's love all about me is my sure armor of defense.

The whole show was over in about forty-five minutes, and I may say it was a good job and everyone here is pleased with the result. Best of

all, not one of my men was killed or mortally wounded,—wonderful luck. The other company had a little harder time of it on their return. Sometime, if my clerk ever gets a moment's time, I will send you a copy of the letter written me by the Major-General. He also summoned me to Headquarters, and said things that made me feel very happy—a fine chap, General B——.

Now Dear, I was wounded in the hand with shrapnel, but nothing to speak of, and I only tell you because of our compact to tell everything, but, believe me, it is only just enough to give me a wound chevron. All this happened yesterday, and I am a little tired to-night.

August 22, 1918.

MY DEAR WONDERFUL WIFE, MY BETH,

I am in a dugout, and to-morrow shall sleep in the open, a very lovely woods. While it was yet daylight I inspected Metz through my glasses. Looks like a pretty town to me, with a large and pretentious cathedral. This is a sad bit of country though, and if I had my way I would present it to Bill the Hun with apologies. It is night here now, but not quite dark. A most beautiful and brilliant moon has just arisen, and it is very light—too light, in fact, for my patrol to operate successfully;

however, this patrol is out, and with it my good wishes. Many moons have passed since I last saw my Beth and perhaps before the next I shall have gone to her. I hope so, Dear! If only we could kill every Hun at once, how gladly we would do it! It is so selfish of man to create a war of this kind; nothing but destruction everywhere, and yet Love, the constructive, is my only consolation in it all. Such a contrast! Nearly all involved in this war are suffering, even our enemies, but they suffer in order to gratify selfish ambition and greed. What unwise mortals we are! I feel over here as if greed and cruelty were the predominant characteristics of the race. We shall realize what we are doing too late, and too late recognize the obvious, that Love should rule the earth. But we never shall, Beth,—Oh Beth, no one ever does!

Goodness, what a pessimistic and philosophic mood I am in to-night—a regular old wiseacre! To change the subject, you asked me to describe a dugout to you. I am writing you in one, by the light of two candles which bid fair to go out soon. I have phone connection, but no electric lights. “C’est la Guerre.” (Rotten French? I have plenty more!) This dugout is constructed on top of the ground or nearly so. It is about ten feet long and seven feet wide, and entering you see

M——’s cot at the left and mine at the right; but before we go more thoroughly into the interior decorations, let me say that it is made of heavy steel covered with cement. The inside is shaped like a barrel, and is about six feet high in the middle. It looks rather like an egg-crate. There are four feet of cement overhead, which is shrapnel proof, unless Jerry should register direct hits with several shells. The likelihood of that is nil, as we are in what is termed a quiet sector. However Jerry assures us quite often enough that he is thinking of us.

Our cots and two tables conclude our furniture, one of the tables for the use of my signal man, and the other for M—— and me, has the phone and buzzer on it. My treasure, my wife’s picture, has the principal corner, and is at this moment looking at her Boy. The floor is of wood and dry and clean, and the cots have no covers. Please dear little sweetheart, don’t let us ever have red comforters on our beds—ye gods, how I dislike them! My poor old raincoat is hanging here, but it has lost a good deal of its smart chic appearance. German barbed wire played havoc with the skirt of it, but I played Hell with Jerry on that same memorable day, bless his heart!

I must stop now, for my pen is nearly empty,

and my candles are nearly out. All the love of your soldier husband's heart is with you, Dear. I shall go outside and look at the stars and the moon, and ask them to smile at Beth, and speed my love and heart to her.

August 20, 1918.

MY DARLING WIFE,

Am all nice and cosy in a little dugout, and glad of it for even the elements are against us to-night. A thunder-shower and a fierce-looking one at that is approaching. The lightning is very bright and quite sharp, the thunder is rolling and sounds like the distant rumbling of guns. I don't like thunder storms, and never have; wish I were where I could have Beth's arms around me. Little Boys never like thunder storms, and this one is no exception to the rule. Scared? Yes, truly, Dear! If Jerry should start shelling in combination with it,—*well*— Mustard gas shelling would make me the sorest. That gas stuff is a mighty bad business. I saw the effect it produced on men a little while ago, and have cursed the Hun, his ancestors, and his posterity, ever since. I have seen enough of his diabolical deeds, the misery and suffering he has caused.

Wonder what you have been doing all day? Did you take a walk with Billikin? I wonder if

he will remember me and shake hands with me when I come home? I am so tired, and want you, Dear. I want all that home and Beth mean to me. But when all that happiness comes we will treasure it the more for the tremendous sacrifice we have made. Only we needed none to make us the happiest children on earth.

I have been questioning greatly the advisability of your working for the government in any form after you get back to the city. I really don't think you can stand it. Please dear little Girl, don't do anything to injure your health,—please, please,—or boy will worry like H——, and that would never do. If I were anxious about you I should have to give up my command, for I should be absolutely no good. You are doing your share in the war. You have given me and made me what I hope I am. You have raised me to the pinnacle of manhood, and all that I am in your eyes or to those about me, I owe to you alone. I, in turn, have trained over two hundred and fifty men, trained them personally, and led them over the top, and they are now producing results on the line. Your work, my work, *Our* work goes on and on——

The shower has cleared now, but it is still very dark, thank goodness, because Fritz can't see to drop bombs on our heads. I got plenty of that on

the British front, and I assure you it is a rather trying experience.

Our day, and our hour, Dear, the day of all others when we should be together. It is Sunday night at ten o'clock, and I know you are writing me. Just think, Dear, we have been married for over a year now, and I cannot recall the time when we were not one. Nor can either of us recall one moment of time when there has been anything but perfect harmony of mind and soul between us. Must go to bed now, 'cause Beth thinks I am there, and wants me to try to rest and I want so much to do as she wishes.

August 25th.

DEAR WONDERFUL WIFE,

Well here I am at last, safe and sound and feeling very well. Furthermore I have been sent to Corps Headquarters to act as Liaison officer on the Staff. General B—— called me over before I came up here, and said some complimentary things, that made me very happy. So what do you think of that, Dear? Am I holding down a soft job or am I not? Well yes, yet it is important and interesting too. You might say that I am the "missing link" between Division Headquarters and Corps Headquarters. I am glad of the change, for I needed to get away from the men for a time. The nervous

strain is terrible out there. And then, too, this gives me a new insight into how, not merely companies, but Divisions and even armies are handled, a new view of the war, the view of those higher in rank. My table is covered with maps, right, left, and center, nice pretty ones all covered with marks.

After this, if I go back to the line, I shall see things in a broader way, but Beth, I doubt if I am ever again to command troops. I have come near breaking under the strain, as did Captain B—— not long ago. If I can make good here, and be sure I will, I shall stay for some time, and the transfer from line duty must come sooner or later. When the time comes for me to stop, I shall stop, so don't be anxious, little worry-girl. Wherever I am I am always careful, Dear, and will take care of your boy for your sake.

I am torn both ways, my wife. This work is big and necessary, but I believe that every man should play his biggest and best cards in this game. My men have sent word that they want me back, and this is, after all, hardly the job for a leader of men. It takes a different type of man to say, “Follow me!” and have the soldier go and go into Hell-fire. And is this my biggest work, the work that is going to send me home soonest?

I just received the wonderful gold cigar cutter you sent me, and I enjoy taking it out in the face of the "Starff" and cutting off all the little ends. But my pipe is the beauty, and such a good smoker. As for the money, dear, I really did not need it in the least, though I have been obliged to loan considerable to the men, some of whom have received no pay since they left America. Also when the poor fellows get into the hospital I try to get extra comforts for them, nothing much but cigarettes and candy, or some little thing they take a fancy to have, and I can use this extra money, never fear. Only Girl must promise to get all sorts of fall clothes, boots, coats, one big fur coat, dresses,—oh everything to please me, and that the most wonderful girl in the world should and must have. If there is anybody inclined to contradict that assertion, I have one notch on the butt of my forty-fiver, and there is room for plenty more!

I have had my silver wrist watch cleaned, but haven't dared risk my real watch out of my sight long enough. My watch that Beth gave me and that has her face on the dial. She tells me the time always, and it is my greatest treasure after Beth's big picture. I also wear the diamond little finger ring all of the time, and always shall, and as for my wedding ring, wild horses could not drag

it from me. Ah, well Dear, soon the war will be over, and I shall be wearing white flannels and sport shirts, and all we are enduring now will be a bad dream that has passed.

FROM THE LAST LETTER PRECEDING THE ST. MIHIEL DRIVE.

I am to return to-day to my company, dear Beth. The Colonel is very anxious to have me back, and the General says he needs his best line officers in the Division. I have done very well here, or at least the Chief so says, but if I am needed I am glad to go back to my Company. It is only for a-while, dear heart. You see we are going to make history near here soon. Wish I might tell you all about it now, but I shall when it is over. Meantime watch the newspapers, for the Americans are going to be the top-liners.

Girl and Boy in a den before a log fire, in the same big chair. Boy telling his dear wife of the days and nights spent in the war zone, days and nights of Hell never to be spent again. It is as it should be—just Beth and Arthur forever and ever—happier dreams hath no man!

THE LAST CHAPTER

"For some do hold our Arthur cannot die
But that he passes into fairy-land."

ON the eve of the St. Mihiel campaign Arthur was suddenly ordered back to his Company. He had been attached, not assigned, to the Staff, and although his assignment would doubtless have soon come, and with it promotion, the Colonel of the 326th Infantry felt that he needed every good line officer for the coming fight. How Arthur felt about it will be evident in his letters. He was glad and proud to have made good at Headquarters, and for many reasons he would have preferred to remain there. He was still too tired to sleep or eat. Nevertheless he went back to his command smiling and brave, concealing his nervous fatigue, and truly flattered and happy to be "needed."

His officers and his men were surprised to see him, and very glad. Arthur did not explain his return, and there was a general impression that he had asked for the transfer. The Company was already located at the point which it was to hold

during the coming action, and which was the pivot of the drive. The town of Lesmenils nearest to Metz on the old "Hindenburg Line," consists of three hills, the separate groups of houses forming three separately named villages, Xon, Hemenville, and Royon. The Commander's Post was on the dominating height at Hemenville, and the Captain's dugout consisted of the ruins of a small farm house. The cellar of this house was the only place at all sheltered from the terrific bombardment that began on the eleventh of September and lasted until the drive was a thoroughly established victory. The German plan was to break the line at this, its most vulnerable and important point, known as the Lesmenils Salient, and had they been successful Nancy would have fallen, and the American campaign would have resulted in disastrous defeat. Lesmenils was a crucial, vital, and terribly exposed section of the line, and it withstood the only serious counter-attack attempted by the Germans. The officer who described it to me said: "It was more terrific than the Argonne, and more depended upon us. The only thing that made the Argonne worse was that it lasted longer."

M Company had orders never to yield. Theirs was to hold the line or die, while the Salient so long deemed unassailable was wiped from off the Ger-

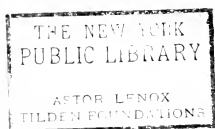
man map. After Chateau-Thierry it was the initial brilliant achievement of our army, a necessary prelude to the plan that finally brought victory and peace.

Arthur delighted in the responsibility and danger of his post. He found that his Senior Lieutenant had already organized the line of defense, and that his Company was in splendid fighting trim. The rough trenches that they occupied were most uncomfortable. They could neither stand upright in them nor lie down for sleep, but their morale and courage were unshakable. "If one of us was down-hearted," says an officer, "the Captain cheered us. He was fearless and confident under the most terrible conditions that you can well imagine."

An element of danger to the line lay in constant visits from hostile airplanes. They flew overhead by day, making plans of the important American positions, and dropped bombs unopposed at night, the Commander's Post being the chief object for attack. Direct hits were registered upon the dugout, but, as it happened, these occurred while the officers were in the cellar, the roof of which held. The temporary Company Commander had sent back asking for an airplane to support his company, and Arthur at once added his urgent request



A GALAHAD IN KHAKI



to the Lieutenant's. Not only was there no plane, but no anti-aircraft gun—no despised "Archie"—for defensive purposes. During the day the men discharged their rifles in rage and despair at the planes, which flew so low that the whites of the eyes of the German pilots were plainly visible.

This was the situation on the evening of September 14th, when the drive was successfully completed except for straightening and strengthening of the American line. The guns of Metz still pounded Hemenville, and Arthur was prepared for a possible Infantry attack. He sent out one of his Second Lieutenants, Groninger, with a patrol, to get in touch with the enemy and report upon their position.

Colonel M—— came in to see him during the early part of the evening, and found him brimming over with hearty courage. "He seemed so confident and had such firm control of the military situation," wrote the Colonel, "that I left him greatly relieved and encouraged. He was full of life and vitality, glorying in the responsibilities devolving upon him in a most difficult and exposed position. I parted from him with that warm handclasp that I like to remember always marked our personal relations, and with the promise to see him on the morrow."

After the Colonel had left, Arthur showed some letters and snapshots, just received from me, to his Senior Lieutenant, Burch. They both laughed over pictures of Billikin, and talked of home and love. At half past nine o'clock he went downstairs to write me, and advised Lieutenant Burch to follow him and try to get some rest. Here is a part of the letter, written by touch in the dark upon a Corona typewriter:

"By the time my little girl has read this letter she will have heard of the big push. It has been a dandy—and we have accomplished all that we hoped. There is no telling where it will end. I came back to my Company just before the show. I have a very pretty little dugout—pretty for a dugout. It seems to be quite safe. Jerry has done his best to knock it in, but so far has been entirely unsuccessful. The furnishings are of the crudest—hangings rather scarce, but we are quite contented.

"Oh, Beth, won't it be heaven when we are once more united? My one hope—my one desire is to be with my wife. Life without her is hell at best—but perhaps we are nearer peace than we dare hope. Seemingly we have Fritz on the run, and may all of his movements be retrograde! Another year surely should see peace with victory, and peace to me will mean just one thing, BETH.

"It is rather difficult to get my mind together to-night. Shells have been going one way or the other and most usually both ways at once for the last forty-four hours. Not a bad record to say the least, but d—— uncomfortable!

"Please dear little girl, don't try to swim to France. I am frightened for fear you may go out too far in the nasty old ocean. Please, please little girl, do be careful."

"Poor little lonely girl!" he wrote at last—"And yes, poor little lonely boy! Good-night dear Beth."

After slipping my letter into the mail-pouch, he mounted to the upper room, and found Lieutenant Burch still at his post, writing at a table, quite unmindful of the danger. Again Arthur urged him to go down into the dugout, remarking at the same time that he was anxious about Lieutenant Groninger, and thought he would step outside and search for him with powerful field-glasses. The patrol had gone down into some woods to the right, but the moon was shining and Arthur's glasses were unusually good.

Scudding clouds obscured the light from time to time, and a fresh wind was blowing. The bombardment seemingly had lessened in intensity, but overhead there was the hum of an airplane, flying

low. A half demolished wall circled the house, ten feet distant from it, and in a depression of that wall Arthur stood and looked toward Metz, and with his glasses swept the softly-lighted landscape for his men.

Within, Lieutenant Burch prepared to lie down on the table, wrapped in his coat, disregarding still the Captain's concern for his safety. No braver officer fought through the war than this loyal lieutenant and valiant leader. He was three times wounded, and, like his Captain, fought without one thought of personal gain, or satisfaction beyond the sense of duty well performed.

Suddenly he heard a frightful crash, and everything was dark confusion. Stones, grit, and shrapnel showered over him. Before he could think or move there came another and more awful explosion and the wall of the house fell in. He discovered later that he had been wounded, but at the moment he only thought to extricate himself and rush outside to find out what had happened. The moon was hidden, but in the dark, lying between the house and outer wall were huddled shapes. Two stirred, and were found to be members of the guard, badly wounded. Lieutenant Burch next touched the heads and hands of two who lay there motionless, and knew that they were dead. "The

hands of one," he says, "I noticed at the time were delicate and slender. It conveyed nothing to me. My one idea was to find the Captain and tell him that his men were dead."

He ran back into the dugout, thinking Arthur might have entered it unnoticed, calling, "Captain Hamm! Oh Captain Hamm! Two of your men are killed!" A moment's silence and he dashed back to the street again and called aloud going from man to man and asking if any knew where Captain Hamm had gone. "I even looked down shell holes in a frenzy," he told me, "for you see, it was the first time death had come to the Company, and I *had to tell the Captain.*"

Quite suddenly, standing in the nightmare chaos of that ruined street, he remembered the feel of a slender hand, unlike any other hand he knew. He did not need to confirm the dreadful knowledge that bore in upon him. "You know," he said to me, "how smooth and sensitive his hand was."

.

All that could be done for Arthur in the way of love and tenderness was reverently done. At great risk, and contrary to orders an ambulance was sent for him, and he was carried far behind the lines. He was wounded at the base of the neck in such a

manner as to cause instant and merciful death, and on his face, unmarked by the explosion was a look of peace and content, as of duty done. The watch he so loved had been severed from his wrist, and by some strange fatality was found upon his breast, just over his brave, loving heart. A piece of shrapnel had passed clean through the dial, and the hands had stopped at twenty-five minutes past eleven.

All night long details of men were out gathering flowers from the gardens of the ruined villages of France. The Colonel wrote that there were "simply heaps,—not white flowers only, but all the brave colors that he loved," gathered by the faithful men who mourned a gallant leader. Not all of his company could be with him at his burial, but as many as could be spared were there, and all of his special friends from the regiment. The flag he died for covered him to the last, and the Chaplain spoke of him with high appreciation and understanding. The Colonel also tried to say farewell, but his voice failed. The band had been recalled from the front some days before, and played, they say, more beautifully than ever before.

His resting-place is on the banks of the Moselle, in the peaceful and lovely little American Ceme-

tery at Milléry. Taps were blown for him, and brave men stood at attention with swelling hearts to salute the passing spirit of this "bright boy knight."

A TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN HAMM

BY CHAPLAIN HYMAN

326TH INFANTRY

"I met Captain Arthur Ellis Hamm one year ago, when I became the Chaplain of the 326th Infantry. He was the commanding officer of Company M. He was the first Captain to invite me to speak to his men on religious subjects. He was the first to contribute to my expenses in the interests of the men. It was with him that I did my first ministry to the wounded. I was with him during the famous raid of August 4th, when he led his company so well, and after penetrating the German lines brought them back without the loss of a man. I was with him at the front during the St. Mihiel drive, messed with him and slept in an adjoining dugout up to the time of his death. A bomb dropped by one of the most daring German aviators killed him. I assisted in the preparation of his body for burial. I conducted the burial service.

"He loved and was loved. I have never known

a Captain to interest himself more in his men than did Captain Hamm. At Camp Gordon the building for housing his men was made comfortable for them in many ways at his own personal expense. He rented a graphophone and a piano for the enjoyment of the men after drill hours. He was always cordial in his greetings with officers. I shall never forget his smile and his handshake.

"He was patriotic and brave. On many occasions he convinced me that he was in the war because he loved his country and wanted to see Democracy rule the world. He sought opportunities to serve. He led his men into battle. He went into exposed places, ready to do or die.

"Oh little town of Hemenville! You will be remembered for many years, for it was while in your defense that Our Beloved Captain gave his life. We shall never forget him. The enemy destroyed this village until barely an outline remained. They took the life of this friendly Captain, but they have not and they never can destroy the memory of him, nor his beautiful influence."

From: Lieut.-Colonel Watkins.

To: Adjutant General, A. E. F. (Through Military Channels).

Subject: Recommendation of Captain Arthur E. Hamm, 326th Infantry (deceased) for D. S. C.

1. For extraordinary heroism in action near Flirey, France, on August 4th, 1918. During a daylight raid conducted by Companies "M" and "K," 326th Infantry, on the enemy lines north of Flirey, Captain Hamm personally led his men over the top, penetrating the enemy lines to a depth of a thousand yards, and bringing in much valuable information concerning the enemy. Captain Hamm and his men captured two of the three machine guns brought in by the raiding party (the first machine guns to be captured by the National Army) and secured all of the identifications of the enemy brought in that morning. Absolutely unmindful of personal danger, Captain Hamm furnished an inspiring example to his men, thereby contributing largely to the success of the raid. The last man to leave the enemy lines that morning was Captain Hamm, who remained behind inside the enemy wire until long after the last of his men had returned to our lines, making certain that none of his men were left behind in the enemy lines.

On September 14th, 1918, during the St. Mihiel drive, while holding a portion of the front lines at Lesmenils, France, Captain Hamm was killed by a bomb dropped from a German plane.

In recognition of his distinguished services, Captain Hamm is recommended for a D. S. C.

HOMER WATKINS,
Lieut.-Colonel, Infantry.

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JUN 26 1919

Abstract

